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MOTHER MARY ROSE

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MOTHER MARY ROSE

Foundress of the Congregation

of the

HOLY NAMES OF JESUS AND MARY

They that are learned shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that instruct many to justice, as stars for all eternity. — DANIEL XII, 3.

The Mother-house
Hochelaga, Montreal
1915

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† PAULUS, Arch. Marianopolitanus.

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APPROBATION

We are happy to bestow our approval on this new *Life of Mother Mary Rose.* As we are aware, it is a tribute of filial veneration towards the Foundress of a religious Institute particularly favored by Heaven, one which now possesses, between the Atlantic and the Pacific, one hundred and twenty-four houses; it has a living membership of nearly sixteen hundred and imparts instruction to almost thirty thousand pupils.

The Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary will naturally find a special interest in this volume. It relates the story of a justly revered Mother, of whom Archbishop Bourget wrote « I invoke her as a saint, whom I trust that God will glorify before men by raising her, through Holy Church, to the honors of the altar ». But we recommend the work to young girls in the outside world also, and to pupils in our boarding schools. In its pages, they will see how God prepares a soul when He desires to employ it in furthering the merciful designs of His bounty. Should youthful hearts be drawn thereby to labor for His glory, whether by a life of prayer, of ministry to the needs of little ones, or of caring for the poor and the friendless, they will learn to become generous and faithful in the gift of self. Almost every page will offer an instance of virile virtue. This book simple and sincere in tone, seeking few of the graces of style, is a good work in itself. May God's blessing descend upon its writer.

† Paul, Archbishop of Montreal.

December 22, 1912.

Part I

LIFE OF MOTHER MARY ROSE IN THE WORLD

MOTHER MARY ROSE

I

SAINT Antoine scarcely figures on the map of Quebec: still less does it hold an important rank among the agricultural villages that outline the course of the River Sorel or Richelieu. To the service of Mother Church and native land, St. Antoine has, however, sent a full quota of its dutiful God-fearing sons and daughters. Among the latter, one of the most noteworthy is Mother Mary Rose, Foundress of the Congregation entitled Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary. Without wealth or powerful friends, or other earthly succor, she has added to the number of influences for good in her native land a body of religious teachers whose usefulness, so far as tested, is

already far-reaching,and promising in still further results for the betterment of society. Mother Mary Rose was born on the sixth of October 1811. Her father, the Sieur Olivier-Amable Durocher possessed, besides a fair share of this world's goods, the more enviable treasure of uprightness, faith, piety and that unquestioning respect for authority so distinctively the heritage of families deeply rooted in the soil.

The child, when baptised, received the name of Eulalie. Little importance is given in general to a child's baptismal name, the choice is often lightly determined. Yet, when studying the life of a servant of God who has indisputably attained to holiness, one stays to consider if possibly some hidden promise of God's predilection has not been held out in the appellation bestowed ; and, if it be true that Eulalie signifies GRACE, it would seem to afford, in this instance, a striking indication of the compelling attractiveness that was to distinguish and win towards imitation, the virtues of the future Foundress.

Miss Durocher could lay claim to an ancestry worthy of honor. Two brothers, Joseph and Olivier

Durocher, originally of Anjou, France, emigrated to Quebec in the eighteenth century and married two sisters, Marie-Louise and Marie-Thérèse Juillet-Avignon. To the elder branch, Eulalie belonged by her mother, daughter of Blaise-Benjamin Durocher and Geneviève Marchessault, and to the younger, by her father, son of Olivier Durocher and Angélique Courtemanche.

The Durochers were evidently held in high esteem by their contemporaries. After the Constitution of 1791, two of the name are listed among the members of the Legislative Assembly, as representing respectively West Montreal and the County of Verchères.

Neither were their first achievements in the land of their adoption without a certain renown. Among the valiant sixteen who, at the call of Dollard, devoted their lives for the salvation of the colony by breaking the power of the Iroquois, we find one of Eulalie's forbears on the maternal side.

The story of this exploit we quote from Faillon's History of the French Colonies : « In the month of April 1660, the celebrated Dollard des Ormeaux

with sixteen young pioneers from Ville-Marie, volunteered their services to the founder of the colony, Monsieur de Maisonneuve, to fight against the Iroquois who, at that time, had located their chief forces above the Island of Montreal. Before setting out on their dangerous mission, each heroic volunteer drew up his will, they reconciled themselves to God by the sacraments of penance and the Eucharist, after which at the foot of the altar they engaged themselves by a solemn oath, to endeavor by force of arms, until their last breath, to strike terror into the ranks of the savages, and to save the colony from destruction. Hardly had they embarked for this perilous enterprise when they heard a cry of alarm from an island, now supposed to be Isle St. Paul. On finding thus close at hand the opportunity so eagerly sought, Dollard swooped down upon the redskins, and repulsed them with such vigor that he would have captured their entire force, had they not swiftly abandoned their canoes and betaken themselves to the shelter of the surrounding woods. This encounter took place on April 19, 1660, and lost to Dollard three of his brave followers whose names deserve to be held in

grateful remembrance. These heroes were Nicolas Duval, Blaise Juillet-Avignon and Mathurin Soulard. »

Blaise Juillet, thus cut off prematurely, was by avocation a farmer, or what is termed in Quebec, a *cultivateur* or *habitant*. His wife Anne-Antoinette de Liercourt, and four children, two girls and two boys, remained to deplore his loss, encountered it is true, in a glorious cause, but none the less an irreparable calamity for his family. The eldest child, a daughter, was but nine years old, the youngest, a boy, of only two. De Maisonneuve appointed a guardian to these children, Hugues Picard-Lafortune, and also a trustee, Major Lambert Closse, then in service on the Island of Montreal. In a second marriage, the widow sometime afterwards espoused Picard-Lafortune.

Marie-Louise and Marie-Thérèse Juillet, sought in wedlock by two brothers, Joseph and Olivier Durocher, were great grand-daughters of the Blaise Juillet who perished as mentioned above.

The paternal line could also boast of its hero,—one much nearer to Eulalie in point of time. Her grandfather, Olivier Durocher, as a youth of six-

teen, served under Montcalm at Carillon. Though he did not actually lose his life on the field of honor, a grievous wound caused him to be counted among the dead. When, before consigning him to burial it was perceived that he still breathed he was cared for and so successfully recalled to life that he survived till the age of eighty.

On the advent of peace he withdrew to his home at St. Antoine. There also dwelt of his two friends and fellow-combatants, Joseph-Emery Coderre and François Courtemanche. This triad of old soldiers loved to meet and recall the stirring times when, as lads, they took part in the events bearing on the destiny of their country. Their thoughts must have often lingered near the fort, around which the struggle chiefly raged. They spoke of their exploits in war with the simple directness of heroes. Nor would they have recognized themselves in the verses of Crémazie who invests with poetic charm the regrets of Canadian heroes and their undying love for the flag of Old France.

One little boy Coderre's grandson, often looked on and listened greedily to the stories of these three venerable comrades and companions-in-arms.

This observant lad, in later years Rev. Misael Archambeault, rector of St. Hugues, thus sets down his impressions.

« I was very young, yet I remember with what eager interest I listened to all that my grandfather and his friends related about the good old times under French rule, ever dear to their remembrance. Mr. Durocher and Mr. Courtemanche seldom went to church without coming in to exchange a neighborly greeting. I gazed admiringly on these virile handsome old soldiers, whose erect bearing, fresh faces, and hair white as snow, offered an appearance quite as striking as their garments of a fashion long gone by. Their full-skirted coats, usually of black cloth with brass or silver buttons, their knee breeches, and long hose upheld with buckled garters, their silver-buckled low French shoes, their broad-brimmed beaver hats, their beardless faces and abundant hair thrown backward and gathered into a braided beribboned queue that fell gracefully upon their shoulders, all formed a picture that stirred my boyish imagination and thrilled my heart. They stood at St. Antoine, the last representatives of an age already departed, their grave

demeanor, their imposing dignity, stamped upon my youthful mind an impression still sharply defined ».

Eulalie's father, Olivier Durocher, son of this soldier of Carillon, showed himself worthy of his ancestry. Advancing years having compelled his father to withdraw from the management of the family estate, Olivier assumed full charge of the paternal possessions. He had aspired to the priesthood, but being an only son, his parents, reluctant to see their name pass away, opposed his project. He yielded to their wishes and wedded his cousin Geneviève Durocher, daughter of Sieur Blaise-Benjamin Durocher, a broker of Quebec, and of Dame Geneviève Marchessault.

The strong woman, says the Wise man, may be compared to a treasure brought from the farthest coasts. Such a treasure had Mr. Olivier Durocher secured to himself by his marriage. Miss Geneviève was born in the Isle of Orléans in 1770. While yet young, she served her apprenticeship to sorrow: her mother died, her father sustained heavy losses, her own future seemed uncertain. Providence came to her assistance. One of her aunts, Madame

Mauvide, lady proprietor of the Isle of Orléans, having no children of her own, asked and obtained from Geneviève's father, the privilege of adopting his motherless child. Madame Mauvide looking henceforth upon Geneviève as her own, brought her up in a manner befitting the wealth and culture with which her life was hereafter to be surrounded. To the Ursulines of Quebec, then as now, favorably known for the excellent training imparted to their pupils, Madame Mauvide sent Geneviève for instruction. On leaving the Convent, the young girl had acquired an education which enabled her to move gracefully in the circle she appeared well qualified to adorn. Gentle and reserved, orderly, fond of labor and of prayer, drawn by nature towards the more serious aspects of life, she asked herself if the cloister might not prove to become her real sphere of action. This self-questioning led her to seek admission among the beloved guides of her girlhood, the daughters of the Blessed Marie de l'Incarnation. A few months spent in the novitiate allowed her to put her desire to the test, and conclusively decide that her mission lay in the outside world. Hence she returned to her aunt who, with-

out delay introduced her into society. The convent girl soon found herself in the midst of a gay social circle, she attended the customary functions, and, it is said, even appeared at the gubernatorial balls.

Miss Geneviève was twenty-four years of age when her hand was solicited and obtained by her cousin Olivier Durocher. Their marriage was celebrated in 1794, in St. John's Church, Isle of Orléans. Strange to say, the society life led by Miss Durocher had not thrown out permanent roots. Having cast in her lot with a tiller of the soil, she put away once for all, her trinkets, fashionable attire and at her luxurious appointments, deeming them unsuitable to her new mode of existence.

From the foregoing it is evident that the movement towards a closer service of Almighty God had stirred the souls of both the father and mother of Eulalie. Their frustrated desire blossomed in other souls as yet to them unknown, but destined to obey a compelling impulsion towards the cloister and the sanctuary. The Lord who had accepted with limitations the unreserved dedication of the young couple to his service, shed abundant blessings about their hearth.

FAMILY HOME OF THE DUROCHERS

The newly wedded pair immediately settled down in the family home of the Durochers at St. Antoine. A numerous group of children graced in time the plain, substantial homestead, wherein Eulalie, the future foundress, spent her happy childhood and youth. Miss Durocher's brothers and sisters, whether as missionaries, secular priests, nuns consecrated to God or simple citizens, bore through their after life the impress of a vigorous Christian home-training. The influence of mind upon mind among these gifted children supplemented the direct action of an unremitting parental discipline.

Ten children, six boys and four girls constituted the Durocher household. These were Léon, born in 1795; Edouard, a year later; Marie-Geneviève, 1798; Flavien, 1800; Calixte, 1802; Marguerite, 1804; Théophile, 1805; Eusèbe, 1807; Marie-Séraphine, 1809, and Eulalie, the date of whose birth, already mentioned, was October 6, 1811.

Before dealing exclusively with the career of Eulalie, we may cast a brief glance over the future of her brothers and sisters. Léon and Marguerite did not survive the years of early infancy. Edouard, Geneviève and Calixte lived as excellent Christians

in secular life, perpetuating the tenure of the paternal acres and the family traditions. From an early period, Flavien felt a drawing towards the priesthood. In spite of the obstacles attendant upon a lack of educational facilities, his strength of will overcame every difficulty. He was ordained in 1823 by the Right Reverend Jean-Jacques Lartigue, titular bishop of Telmesse, then administrator of the diocese of Montreal, though dwelling in Quebec. A secret irresistible attraction drawing the soul of the young priest towards the religious life, he joined the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, a missionary Order. recently come from France and having its headquarters in Longueuil. His zeal for active apostleship led to his evangelizing the Montagnais of the Saguenay. When worn out with strenuous labor as a missionary among the Indians, he was appointed to organize a new parish, Saint-Sauveur, in the city of Quebec, where he died full of years and good deeds, in 1876. The month of June, 1912, saw Saint-Sauveur honor itself by the erection of a statue to the saintly priest who had secured the perpetuation of this flourishing municipality at the cost of silent sacrifice and unre-

mitting toil for the welfare of his flock.

The second priest chosen from among the Durochers was Théophile, ordained in 1828. His ministry called him as curate to St. Laurent, St. Geneviève, St. Benoit, and finally to Belœil, Que., where he received an appointment as Parish Priest, and where we shall meet him frequently in connection with the events of his sister Eulalie's after years. His decease occurred at Belœil in 1852, though he had but reached the comparatively early age of forty-seven. By the medium of a circular letter to his clergy, the bishop of Montreal made known the magnitude of this loss to the diocese, and himself delivered the funeral sermon, thus manifesting the high personal esteem in which he had held this holy priest. Still a third son of Olivier Durocher, Eusèbe, raised to the priesthood in 1833, consecrated his life's efforts to the service of souls. After several years of active ministry as curate and parish priest, he followed the example of his brother Flavien, and cast in his lot with the Oblates. His health proving unequal to the calls of a missionary career, he was relieved from the obligation of the religious vows, and survived, a

semi-invalid, till 1880, when he ended his days at the Hôtel-Dieu, St. Hyacinth, Que.

Séraphine, in the flower of her eighteenth year, entered the *Congrégation de Notre-Dame*. During twenty-five years as a nun, she devoted herself to the teaching profession in Lower Quebec, in Terrebonne, in Pointe-aux-Trembles, and in Berthier. Some few months later than her brother Théophile, in 1852, she heard the call to her eternal reward. Her religious name was Sister Sainte-Cécile. Her memory still survives among her Sisters because of the virtues that marked her career.

Eulalie, the latest born, was the last of her family to be called to God's service, though from the magnitude of the work she was selected to undertake, she stands preeminent among them all. On the very day of her birth, she received Holy Baptism at the hands of Rev. Father Alinotte, P.P., the sponsors being Mr. Joseph Dufresne and Mrs. Madeleine Roy. The tenderness lavished upon this last occupant of the family cradle, by both father and mother, surrounded all the early years of little Eulalie. To the whole family she became the object of a special affection ; and as her intelli-

gence developed, she gladdened the home by her cheerfulness, her comparative precocity, and what counted above all other things in this Christian household, by her love of things holy and heavenly. She never tired of hearing the legends of saints and martyrs. Soon she made herself familiar with the lives of the three virgin-martyrs who bear the name of Eulalie, striving, meanwhile, to imitate some of the things they had done to deserve their crown. Quite elated was she to learn that her own birth had occurred on the feast day of St. Bruno, founder of the Carthusians. Was it by a secret prevision that she early endeavored to model her conduct on his well-known love for silence, prayer and ready obedience?

It has already been mentioned that Mr. and Mrs. Durocher were Christians of strong fibre. Their reputation for upright dealing, for sure and sympathetic entry into the sorrows of their friends, for judicious counsel and a living piety, secured to them the esteem of the entire community. Severe in aspect, somewhat unbending in manner, Mr. Durocher manifested nevertheless, in social intercourse, a lively interest in the concerns of

friends and neighbors. Besides he could be relied upon for disinterested advice or for willing service. He was at all times a refuge for those in need. Of the mother in a comfortably established country-home, it has been pertinently observed : « She is the ruler on whom everything pertaining to the farm depends ; she guides the workers, mind and soul, she directs every channel through which happiness flows to those who own her sway, from the cooing dwellers in the dove-cote, to the little ones of the household ». Such a ruler was Mrs. Durocher. Attentive to her duty as wife, mother and home maker, she diffused about her an atmosphere of peace, the tranquility of order. Endowed with a seemingly tireless activity, hiding beneath her sincere unaffected kindness a resolute firmness of will, she directed her household with no apparent effort, winning the allegiance of her dependents by a personal interest in their joys and sorrows. She seldom paid visits, yet she exercised the generous hospitality traditional among the Durochers. Moreover, she freely practised the works of mercy. Not only her home, but her heart and hand were open to the poor, the afflicted or those

in distress. According to their point of view, some considered her to be liberal and sympathetic to excess ; others disappointed by her evident disinclination to appear in society, attributed her reserve to a haughty disdain. Madame Durocher turned a deaf ear to captious criticism and quietly pursued her accustomed path. Long after her death, the Right Reverend Bishop Bourget remarked of her : « The remembrance of this Christian womanly life, has escaped the inroads of time. Her virtues claim a willing veneration where she lived longest and was most widely known ».

In that already distant period, far more than in these days of labor-saving devices, the cultivation of a farm called for a rude and unceasing activity. The demand for constant effort was ever imperative among the Durochers both as a duty and as a necessity, in order to bring up a numerous family, to provide them with an education in harmony with their descent, and to fix their future standing in the society of the time. It was the epoch of the *Seigneur* in Quebec — « les Seigneurs » whose ancestors having all obtained their titles from the king of France, held themselves under obligation

to transmit without stain the record won by force of arms on the field of battle, or in the discharge of civic duties. High ideals of conduct were transmitted and upheld by a faithful adherence to the practice of the Catholic faith as taught by a clergy seldom if ever, surpassed for zeal, solid acquirements and lofty simplicity of living. Needless to insist that the family of Olivier Durocher offered the pattern of a Catholic household. « They are church people » was commonly said of them, when referring to their regular and devout attendance at divine service. In their home, night prayer assembled the entire household the children and the servants included, while often to a late hour, the pious mother prolonged her private practices of devotion. Is it surprising that the dew of heaven fell abundantly upon a soil so well prepared to profit by its action? Such was the atmosphere breathed by Eulalie from her entrance into life. The youngest of the ten, and singularly intelligent, she had but to look at what went on around her in order to absorb those lessons of practical industry and of piety which bore in her at a later period, such far-reaching effects. Truly, God had chosen

and gone out to meet her from the beginning, by the gift of virtue-loving parents.

Of Eulalie herself, it used to be affirmed that she was born devout. When hardly more than three years old, a brother relates, if she had failed to say her morning or night prayer, she would run to her mother with tears, to be allowed to repair the omission. During the day, she would often ask : « Is it time for prayer ? » As soon as the little feet could cover the distance, her mother took the child to church. Here, immature age could easily have set her among the little ones who disport themselves in the sight of the Lord. But no ; already the child was an adoring angel. On her knees, her tiny hands joined, quiet in posture and aspect, she would gaze at the altar which held all her attention. The Tabernacle was her magnet. Had she already heard the sweet voice of Jesus calling her, as so often He has called to little children ? Who may tell ? ... It was the mother who lifted her to a seat, and kept her there when fearful of the little maid's over-tiring herself. Otherwise, Eulalie would have always remained on her knees.

Once outside of the church, however, this adoring angel became a very human little girl, and how attractive! She was fair, with the warm delicate pallor that speaks of health. Her blond hair the color of ripe wheat, was abundant, and a pair of large limpid brown eyes, sparkled with merriment or grew pensive according to the mood of the hour. Slender, lithe and alert, she seemed always merry as a bird. Though never noisy, she joined quite willingly in the games of her brothers and sisters who played on the lawn, or in a field near the home. One of her greatest joys was to be drawn about in a little cart, all her own. Her brother Calixte, who loved her tenderly became at will her spirited steed, and the joyful cries of his little sister « Do it again ! » « Do it again ! » persuaded him to run till out of breath. But play-time over, often even in the midst of a game, she would run to her mother's side, where she found her greatest happiness. Had her father and mother some intimate forecast of her future destiny? Did they see in her movement towards prayer and piety the sign of a high calling? The only thing we know surely is that although pains had not been

spared in the education of their other children, to that of Eulalie they gave particular attention. The mother kept guard over her as over a treasure. Herself, she taught the child prayers and catechism, she drew from the treasures of her convent education, the principles of virtue that adorned her own life, and implanted them anew in this budding soul where they soon displayed a full and beautiful maturity. Eulalie's rapid advance in the virtues suitable to her age became a source of admiring comment. « To a childlike, candid innocence, she joined a precocious wisdom, an uprightness and a quiet carefulness seldom found in one of her years. Nowhere could be seen a child, a daughter, more docile, more loving, more grateful ». (1)

These favorable indications of character came to her chiefly by inheritance from her mother, several of whose traits of temperament reappeared in this cherished daughter. Not that the child did not display on occasion an impatience and a native stubborness of will, but in time these inclination which easily degenerate into defects became, under wise and proper control, the basis of a generous

(1) Notes of Mr. Lecours.

firmness most useful amid the vicissitudes of after life. Such was the result of Eulalie's training. At an age, when, usually a child interests only the home circle, she was cited throughout the parish as an example of reserve, gentle behavior, and a tender deference towards her elders. Other mothers held her up to their own little ones as a model for imitation. Indeed, it is in the light of a model that she will continue to claim attention. Childhood over, she will be offered as a pattern for young girls ; afterwards to her Sisters in religion, she will seem an embodiment of fidelity to rule, and what is still more worthy of remark, she will be pointed out by her ecclesiastical superiors as the model Foundress of a Religious Congregation. The glory of the saints, however, is not won except in the shadow of the cross. As yet unacquainted with sorrow and trial however, unaware of the severe and heavy trials that awaited her later years, she lived happily among her brothers and sisters, her outlook bounded only by the behests of a father and mother dearly loved.

Delicately constituted, Eulalie could never be permitted to attend the village school ; it was her

mother, as we have seen, who superintended her early education. She had, moreover, a preceptor of another kind, staid, manly, God-fearing, in the person of her grandfather, the retired veteran of many campaigns. From the chronicle of her life, let us borrow the charming page that follows: «The old soldier of Carillon, withdrawn from public life, dwelt with his son, and employed his vigorous waning years in the discharge of light but useful occupations, that always abound in a prosperous farmer's domain. His favorite employment, however, was to teach reading and writing to the interesting grandchild ever docile and responsive to his tuition. His sincere affection was warmly returned. The child turned to him quite as readily and easily as to her mother. She drank in the history of her own country and that of France, the mother-land, while listening to his recital of scenes he had witnessed, of wars from which he had issued after wounds and honorable service. Her great eyes questioned always, and the venerable old hero who gained new ardor from the eager listener, proudly accommodated his seventy or seventy-five years to this budding intelligence

of six to ten. The placid lake was feeding a busy streamlet soon to become a river, the aged oak offered its shelter to the modest blossom that sought to hide from a too brilliant sun. Touching to all beholders it must have been, to look upon the child at her grandfather's knee watching attentively while he pointed out her letters with the same hand that had borne a musket, and listening while he repeated lessons with the voice that had shouted defiance to the cries of the foreign enemy or to the warwhoop of the Iroquois. An intimacy like this, a glorious past mingling with a peaceful present, transmits without effort the hereditary virtues characteristic of blood and race ».

The future was veiled. The present for the household of Olivier Durocher meant tranquility undisturbed, the happiness belonging to those years in the life of a father and mother when as yet all the children are gathered around the family table. It was a joy in itself to behold the promising group so justly compared in Holy Writ to the olive branches that push out graceful and strong, taking root in the fertile soil of native land, and

nourished by the water of its rivers.

Mr. Durocher's property, one of the picturesque sites of St. Antoine, faced the Richelieu, and stood about forty rods distant from the village proper. The old stone house having no pretension to architecture but solidly constructed, roomy and comfortable, with pointed gables and dormer-windows, was at the time one hundred years old. It occupied an attractive location not more than one hundred feet from the river bank. Surrounded with trees and gardens bordered by the raised and rounded banks of the swift blue river, separated from the public road by a grassy slope and a row of poplars, it appeared even in its outside aspect the stronghold of a happy and restful security. From any point of view on the farm the prospect charmed the spectator. In front, the Richelieu reflected in its waters, trees, church spire, evening stars and wandering clouds. On the opposite bank, stood the pretty prosperous village of St. Denis. On either side as far as eye could reach, were cultivated fields, broken here and there by an elm, a graceful clump of maples, or some denser remnant of the original virgin forest,

while now and again a hill or a mountain lifted its verdant summit towards the heavens.

Amid scenes like these dwelt Eulalie Durocher. Physically and intellectually, she found a harmony in her surroundings, to which could be applied the word of Bossuet : « Certain places as well as certain persons are destined by God to promote a general welfare and well-being among men ».

II

EULALIE in time stood on the threshold of her tenth year, the period of childhood customary in those days for receiving First Holy Communion. The better to prepare for that solemn act, she was sent as a boarder to the Convent of St. Denis, then as now, ably directed by the Sisters of the Congrégation de Notre-Dame. For the heart of a child, it is generally a sorrowful trial to leave home for the first time, and to find one's self amid strangers. Little Eulalie had now to face this ordeal; bashful, sad, almost terrified, she found herself far away from her mother, amid new scenes and unaccustomed faces, called upon to conform to a discipline widely different from anything hitherto familiar. However, she set herself resolutely to assimilate what was new in this manner of living. No details have been furnished respecting

the two years she spent at the convent, we know only that according to the general testimony, in school as in the home, she proved herself obedient, sweet-tempered and prayerful, and that, in due time, she was admitted to the Holy Table. Her mother came to be witness of the child's happiness, and received Holy Communion by her side. Robed in white, draped in her filmy veil, her soul perfumed with the candor of innocence, Eulalie drew near the Eucharistic feast with a child's untroubled joy. The Tabernacle on which she had gazed with longing since her earliest years, was about to open before her, and more favored than the tiny adoring angel of old, she could now partake of the celestial food, that heaven's angels may not claim. Who can gauge the power of the graces infused by the Divine Guest in his first visit? On such a day does He not often breathe the potent whisper that determines the future career of a chosen soul? Once received, the impulse can seldom be resisted; certainly it is never forgotten, and the strength of purpose it confers upon a youthful spirit, remains unshaken to life's latest hour. Each happening seems, in its measure, the predestined

result of the early summons heard on First Communion day. More and more intimately is it understood with each progressive movement that bears the soul towards the goal of its desire.

On leaving the boarding-school, Eulalie, now twelve years old, began to take an active share in the domestic duties awaiting her at home. The upkeep of a house constantly offers work to willing hands among farmers whose acreage is more than ordinarily great. It must also be remembered that every garment worn in those early Canadian days, was of material home-spun and home-made. Year by year, the flax had to be converted into linen, the fleece of sheep or lambs into cloth of varying weight and quality. Spinning, knitting, sewing, and mending, added notably to the labor of the household. Its burden fell almost exclusively upon the wife and daughters. A well-kept dairy added to their cares, since every housekeeper was careful of her reputation for excellent butter and cheese products. Although Madame Durocher continually employed two maids, besides other help in season, only by means of strict superintendence and constant watchfulness over details did home-life be-

come well-ordered, peaceful and profitable. The evenings were given up to sewing and knitting. This exacting task was seldom entrusted altogether to servants. Séraphine, and her younger sister cheerfully accepted as a matter of course, the portion that fell to their share.

Eulalie's winsome sympathy and her desire of giving pleasure made her always a favorite with her brothers. She seemed to divine their wishes and to discover the effective way to cheer and console in their moments of depression. Were they ill? She was the most painstaking of nurses, quite as ready to amuse them, as to relieve their aches and pains. When she learned that one of them would go to Montreal to dispose of some farm produce, she managed on his arrival in the evening to have ready for his supper some favorite dish or toothsome unlooked-for dainty.

Though by nature sprightly and affectionate, Eulalie did not show great attraction for society outside of her own immediate circle. She cared so little for company that, even in her own home, she often avoided meeting the young college students who came to visit her brothers during the holidays.

ST. BASIL'S SEMINARY LIBRARY

Believing this distaste for social amusements to indicate a call to the cloister, Mrs. Durocher, in order to facilitate matters, if such should prove to be the Divine Will, undertook to open the path for both of her daughters by going, herself, to make a retreat at the ancient Mother-house of the Sisters of the Congregation, St. Jean-Baptiste Street, Montreal. After three days of pious recollection, she consulted with her husband on the advisability of having the second youngest daughter, Séraphine, return for a while to the boarding school, knowing that a vocation is more seriously considered amid congenial surroundings. Without delay Séraphine entered into her mother's views, inwardly delighted by an arrangement that favored her secret wishes; and, some years later, this intelligent well-favored young girl embraced the life of her teachers becoming, as we have seen, Sister Sainte-Cécile. Hardly had she departed for the novitiate when Eulalie took her place as convent pupil, while cherishing the hope that she, too, at the close of her studies, might be found worthy to enroll herself among the daughters of the Venerable Marguerite Bourgeoys. To offer her life to Jesus

for the education of young girls in a Congregation dedicated to Mary, His Mother, appeared to her, an ideal destiny.

While at St. Denis she fulfilled her scholastic duties with so much willing exactness, that she soon won and retained the admiring approval of her schoolmates. They loved her more dearly because she appeared to realize her own excellence not at all. « How high-minded in my estimation was Eulalie Durocher », says one of them, « she alone seemed unaware of her merit. Her success she attributed to our Lord as an answer to prayer, but a mistake or a failure she assumed to be no one's fault but her own ».

Every day her piety became more deep and fervent. The older pupils had obtained leave to rise at a somewhat earlier hour in order to employ a short time in reflecting on the eternal truths by means of meditation. Eulalie never missed a morning. Her strength of will did not fail to manifest itself in several other circumstances. The Sisters, trusting to her upright judgment and her delicate sense of obligation, often left her in charge, when, during some enforced absence, they required

the aid of a substitute. The little flock remained content and tranquil under the guidance of this gentle shepherd. Already she possessed the secret of the discipline that wins obedience to law through love for the lawgiver. Her own sole motive in this, as in all the demands of duty was to become more pleasing to God. Thinking humbly of self, she was always astonished at the outspoken esteem of schoolmates and teachers. Their commendation caused no alteration in her docile, affable, and unassuming demeanor. It would scarcely be an exaggeration to apply the following words as her eulogy: « In the chapel she is fervor personified; when at study she becomes the living incarnation of tireless effort; at recreation, cordiality smiles and humility seeks to retire from view; everywhere, duty in person is passing by ».

Attentive to the voice of her teachers, she was still more carefully on the alert to hear the words our Lord whispered to her heart when He claimed it for Himself alone. General opinion set Eulalie amid the elect souls who seem visibly destined to attain to eminence in virtue; she was looked upon as a lowly follower of Jesus, foreordained to spend

her days in the shadow of the altar, and to draw down upon earth the blessings of Heaven. This evident fitness for a consecrated career was, however, to constitute but a part of the mission which her secluded pious childhood might have permitted her to begin without delay. Her predestined part, hidden as yet from human eyes, demanded a discernment of mind and a balance of judgment to be acquired only in the school of experience. She must attain to the fixedness of principle that implies an unwavering firmness, and the compassion for human weakness that marks a character tried by sorrow and opposition. And behold, events will so shape themselves under the guiding of Divine Providence, as to combine harmoniously in perfecting the moral formation of this young girl called from on high to accomplish an undertaking, the achievement of which will directly influence an ever-increasing multitude of souls.

But the sedentary life of a boarding-school, so different from the active existence of a busy home, weakened Eulalie physically; at the end of three months, she found herself compelled to return to her parents. The next year, having regained strength,

she entered school again, but four months later, the symptoms of exhaustion, having appeared in an aggravated form, again obliged her to relinquish the hope of pursuing further study in a convent. This time, in bidding her farewell, her teachers thought it prudent to advise against any other attempt to embrace a convent life, her frail constitution appearing to indicate that the will of God did not definitively point in that direction. Afflicted beyond measure by this seeming defeat of her plans, she repeated on the way home: « Lord, what wilt thou have me do ? » The response was to be long in coming. Despite her keen disappointment, she suppressed every manifestation of sorrow and resumed her duties in the home of which once more she became the charm. Such in substance is the report furnished by her brother, Mr. Eusèbe Durocher.

At the beginning of 1830, some few months after having left school, Eulalie was called upon to undergo her first searching trial, to experience an affliction the sorest and most cruel that can befall a daughter's heart: she lost her beloved mother. After an illness of no longer than a fort-

night, Madame Durocher gave up her soul to God, having at her side the faithful companion of her wedded life, and all her children except Sister Sainte-Cécile. She had tasted the sweet consolation of receiving the Holy Viaticum and Extreme-Unction from the hands of her eldest son, Father Flavien. She departed for the true home above amid the benedictions bestowed in the name of Holy Church by two of her boys, « her priests », as she had always loved to call them.

« The strong woman shall smile at death ». Once again, in this praiseworthy Christian wife and mother, was fulfilled the promise of Holy Writ. In truth, she bade farewell to this world with a smile on her lips ; but what a void was left at the fireside where she had so long been the dominant influence ! Eulalie, even more than others, keenly felt the loss. Attachment to her mother had been for her almost a cult. When losing this trusted guide, it seemed as if all existence were shaken out of its ordinary groove. At first she thought that never again could she take an interest in household affairs, her helper in encountering their difficulties having been removed beyond recall.

But after a brief interval of mourning she realized how necessary it was for the welfare of other members of the family, that she should be self-controlled and self-forgetful. Turning towards our Blessed Mother Mary, she claimed Her care with a filial confidence unknown in happier days. Under stress of the burden that weighed so heavily, her character gained in self-reliance through the exercise of noble and unremitting effort for those who still had a claim on her solicitude. Her countenance henceforward became less mobile in its play of expression, her womanly qualities matured in silence under the shadow of the Cross.

Some time afterwards, however, the call to a life in religion again became insistent. Deeming it too great a risk to make a third trial in a teaching order, Miss Durocher considered the desirability of acquainting herself with the life-duties of a Sister of Charity, and her thought turned towards the General Hospital, Quebec. Here again, frail health shortly proved to be an insuperable obstacle. « Decidedly », she said to herself, « I am laboring under an illusion when I aspire to the honor of undertaking a religious career ».

She returned home and again fell gently into the place always reserved for her at the domestic hearth. Having recuperated her strength, she resigned her soul to this fresh disappointment, and each morning gave herself up with new energy to the task of the day, in order that the dear one gone should not be too sorely missed. Then it was that tact, foresight, economy, prudence, kindness, all the natural gifts that facilitate administration, and claim a willing adherence to the established order, quietly developed in her with the passage of time. So entire became her gentle influence that her father, her brothers and the helpers in the household deferred without question to all her decisions. Order and peace continued to weave their spell over this home whence the trusted leader had been irrevocably withdrawn. The family customs endeared to the household by the departed mother, were carefully retained by Eulalie. Prayer, labor and tranquil happiness continued their sway.

Naturally, Miss Durocher might have chosen a home of her own had she so desired. She possessed every charm that could inspire a life-long attachment ; but such a view of her future seems never to

have entered her mind. Her one strong attraction was for the cloister. Unable to satisfy her soul's longings in this direction, she trusted coming days to God, bowed in simple submission to His decrees and devoted the present to the duties nearest at hand. « Time and God befriend all willing souls », says Father Ventura. She counted on these friends while acquitting herself of the responsibilities incumbent upon her as eldest daughter and directress of the home. She purposed to put into practice the virtues reclaimed by her actual position and thereby to become still more faithful to the higher ideal of Christian life. « The vain amusements and gossip of the outside world offered no charm to her naturally serious mind. She mingled in the society that surrounded her, but she was not of it. Neither did her reserve in this particular cause the display of anything austere or forbidding in her aspect. She was looked upon as a source of edification to the entire parish. With evident reason, people admired this modest young girl innately courteous, always grave in manner, ever delicate in her consideration for what was due to others. It was felt that in her, the riper judgment

of age had preceded maturity in years. Her graceful and dignified bearing commanded immediate respect. An unmistakeable air of refinement drew attention to her movements wherever she appeared. Luxury was little known in those colonial days; thus it happened that although Miss Durocher's father was a well-to-do farmer, his daughter's mode of dress was quite severely plain and simple. « Miss Durocher never exhibited a desire for wearing ornaments, not even a flower ». Such is the testimony borne in old age by a priest who had known her well. (1)

Here may be quoted the comments of a venerable lady already past four score, who writes her recollections after an interval of sixty-nine years. « Miss Durocher, » she says, « I knew her, admired, venerated and loved her. In person, she was tall and stately, had a striking countenance and was staid in manner though with no affectation of reserve. Her face was a long oval, her features delicate. The lucid brown eyes shadowed with long lashes, revealed the nobility and candor of her soul. She was exceptionally lovable though

(1) Rev. Mr. Archambault.

not expansive by nature. Often, she might be encountered at the bedside of a sufferer, though she seldom frequented the ordinary social reunions. Long before her entry into the religious life, she had the countenance of a person always interiorly communing with God. The sole diversion she allowed herself was to ride her favorite horse, this exercise being much in favor with young girls of the period. Either when going on such excursions or coming home, she paused near the Church, where she alighted and spent some few minutes in a visit to her Lord. » (1)

The description given by this venerable lady, a pastel in subdued colors, would hardly win a passing notice in our more swiftly-moving times. We are little accustomed to think of a prospective novice in riding habit, directing a spirited horse by a touch. Gentle society in the early nineteenth century was more familiar with this gracious and healthful pastime.

If Miss Durocher made a stop at the Church in the midst of her pleasures, she did not fail to go there still more frequently through pure devotion.

(1) Mrs. L. St. Roch.

Oftentimes, she wended her way at early morning to assist at Holy Mass, and to partake of the Bread of the strong. With the aid of her Savior she felt that she could never be alone in the path of life. The Eucharist fortified her soul, illumined it, and secured to her the spiritual companionship she coveted.

As already remarked, she sought to testify her love for God by act rather than by word ; her piety manifested itself in daily intercourse with friends and dependents, by greater constancy in maintaining serenity of spirit, a more kindly interest in the concerns of those who appealed to her, a greater faithfulness in attention to the little things that make or mar daily existence. The gay cheerfulness she strove to attain soon became a second nature. Hearts were cheered or uplifted by the merry laugh which has been characterized as « God's own music ».

About this time it happened that an unforeseen event contributed to break up the sameness of her home life. Rev. Théophile Durocher, her second brother, recently appointed pastor in the parish of St. Benoit, asked if she would undertake for a

PARISH CHURCH
ST. ANTOINE-ON-RICHELIEU

while the household management of his rectory. In demanding of his home people a privation so far reaching in effect, the young priest was not animated by selfish motives, he but yielded to the pressure of necessity. Obliged to give a home to the elderly niece and the former maid-servants of his predecessor, he felt the need of anticipating all misconception on their part, and he knew that Eulalie's tact would make her an acceptable mistress of the situation. He knew also, that she would never draw back from a sacrifice demanded, or a charitable deed to be undertaken for the welfare of his parishioners. With the reluctant consent of her father, Miss Durocher departed for an undetermined stay at St. Benoit, where her gentle dealings shortly obtained the success foreseen and desired by her Reverend brother.

« The months she spent in this parish, always more or less ailing in health, furnish an almost unbroken record of self-denying acts. Nearly every day, she found herself called upon to entertain the friends and relations of the preceding incumbent. Moreover, these claims upon her hospitality, though informal, had to be remitted

in kind, and to say the least, this continual exchange of courtesies offered a considerable contrast with the life she was accustomed to lead, and sorely tried her love for solitude. I can speak with certainty, having sojourned for a month in the parish residence at this period. I was the admiring witness of the way she adapted herself to circumstances, the nobility of soul and the kindness of heart Miss Durocher manifested to attain the end she had in view. I saw her always, even when suffering and fatigued, even-tempered, cheerful, calm and self-possessed. An exquisite courtesy of manner made her guests feel quite at ease amid strange surroundings, it encouraged the more retiring, and soothed the sorrowful. She seemed to be the only person unaware of her undoubted influence for good. » (1)

After a stay of several months in St. Benoit, Rev. Father Théophile Durocher, accepted a call to the parish of Belœil, and Eulalie was left free to return to her tranquil home at St. Antoine. There she resumed her duties towards her aging father who had sorely missed her care and filial

(1) Notes of Mr. Lecours.

tenderness. This was in 1831. Scarcely had she settled once more into the accustomed groove, when Rev. Father Théophile came to propose that his father should permanently give up the management of the farm to his son Calixte, withdraw from active life and come to spend his remaining days in the rectory at Belœil. Eulalie would be, as heretofore, his chief dependence, and, at the same time, would superintend the domestic arrangements of the parish house. The offer did not prove displeasing to the old gentleman. Profoundly religious in feeling, he considered that it would really be a privilege to dwell with his priestly son ; the advantage of living close to the church seemed a boon even more desirable. As he quaintly expressed it, he « would neighbor with the good God ». Miss Durocher accepted this new adjustment of her destiny with customary calm, it being a question not of promoting her own happiness but that of others, With mingled emotions she bade a final adieu to the home of her childhood, to the trees that secluded it so agreeably, the natural charms so long familiar ; she gave up the joy of presiding over her own house, broke the

ties that bound her to the church where so often she had prayed at her mother's side, and in whose consecrated ground that mother lay quietly at rest ; she uttered a reluctant farewell to the surroundings which, it is well said, constitute the soul of one's native place, « that draw our hearts with tightened cords and force us to love. »

When considering the path marked for Miss Durocher in her passage from-birth to death, it is clearly evident that she was not permitted by the Almighty to strike out roots any where. From the convent in which she had hoped to spend her life, she was called to the headship of her father's house. Once settled there definitively, as it might appear, she was unexpectedly summoned to St. Benoit. Thence again, home to St. Antoine, and finally, to Belœil. At the last, after she had realized the dream of her life by the blessing of a religious profession, she found herself obliged to construct by her own efforts the cradle of her religious infancy and to build up a home for her Congregation. To raise her to the heights required for an achievement, — hers by Divine decree, — to render her apt for a task so truly providential, God seemed

to play upon the chords of this soul so simply earnest and loving. He drew forth rich harmonies of self-renunciation, patience under trial, immolation of human satisfaction. At the same time, He walked beside her, He led her by the hand. With Him as Guide, how could she fail to find abiding rest even in the midst of vicissitude and change?

III

AMONG the fair and fruitful lands that border the Richelieu the site of Belœil is, beyond all doubt, one of the most attractive. As expressed by its name this village holds a foremost rank for loveliness of scene and beauty of surroundings. The parish, eighteen miles distant from St. Antoine, is located on the same side of the stream. It could not appear to Eulalie a place of exile like St. Benoit, where the environment had never appealed to her sympathies. Moreover, at her side, were both father and brother. According to the general opinion of clergymen throughout the diocese, and of his own immediate parishioners, the new pastor of Belœil presented a finished type of the priest and the gentleman. « What an unmistakeable impress of social standing he bore », cries Mr. M. Archambault. « What a generous-hearted

hospitable clergyman he was always ! He possessed nothing that he did not wish to share ; his rectory was called ' the priests ' house'. How kindly did he issue an invitation to youthful seminarians to spend their holidays with him, or to profit by his hospitality when their too arduous application to study had imposed a needed rest ».

Countless tributes are paid by his beneficiaries, in acknowledgment of his charity towards the poor, or the distressed. His tireless vigilance as pastor, his genuine piety that manifested itself in a zealous care for the ceremonies of the cult, his fervor in prayer, whether in administering the sacraments or while celebrating Holy Mass, all are mentioned as praiseworthy and edifying.

Miss Durocher considered hers a happy lot when she found herself in this atmosphere of priestly holiness that afforded facility to satisfy, at the same time, her devotion towards Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, and towards His Immaculate Mother. Heaven was about to bestow an additional favor. The parish of St. Hilaire, just opposite Belœil, possessed in its pastor, Rev. Mr. Odelin, a priest of tried virtue and exceptional culture of

mind. The doctrines of the misguided Father de Lamennais, already prevalent among Catholics in France, had recently penetrated into Canada. A multitude of well-meaning minds had yielded a ready assent to the brilliant though erroneous theories and the seductive ideals eloquently set forth by the new self-appointed teacher and his school. The venerable parish priest of St. Hilaire had speedily detected the sophisms of Lamennais' philosophy : a series of luminous articles on the subject brought him into notice as a safe and reliable exponent of Catholic doctrine concerning the subjects under discussion. To this prudent ecclesiastic Miss Durocher soon confided the guidance of her soul. Acting under his counsels, she entered without hesitation into the path of perfection, and progressed by rapid steps along the arduous way.

« If any man say, I love God, and loveth not his brother, he is a liar », says St. John. Judged according to this test, Eulalie's piety was sincere, she loved God and her fellowmen. Her spirit of faith found issue in a variety of social works. Beginning with what lay nearest at hand, her chief duty at this time being the superintendence

of the rectory, she saw to its details with a diligence that ensured the well-being and the satisfaction of every one concerned. Under existing circumstances this household management called for tactful handling. While as mistress of the house, she was obliged, so to say, to be every where at once, the fact of her being still an attractive young woman made it absolutely requisite that she should seldom be prominent on the scene. Moreover, in order to properly safeguard her dignity, the position demanded that her authority over the domestic servants should prevail, beyond cavil or question. Hence, a strict reserve in her dealings with them had to go hand in hand with a kindly indulgence that would keep them loyal to her person, and content with her rulings. Never could she tolerate, much less provoke on their part, the least resistance to her behests or the slightest approach to an impertinent familiarity. Her sentiment of what was due to the situation, her prudence and considerate action steered her without mishap through these difficulties. Once safely under the spell of her gentle influence, her upright dealing, her prompt succor in illness or affliction, her servants loved her, and

several proved their attachment at a later date, when they followed her as auxiliary Sisters into the Congregation begun under her auspices. Besides attentively caring for her father and her brother, her charitable tendencies found a new outlet when it became necessary to attend the needs of clergymen to whom the Reverend Rector of Belœil, as already remarked, freely opened his house. The sentiment of veneration for the priesthood, still so perceptible among the children of the faith in Canada, was at that time even more accentuated. There were so few priests and the benefit of their ministry was so coveted. Nowhere could this reverential spirit have been more marked than among the Durochers. To them the sacerdotal calling ever appeared as if surrounded with a halo. Both father and mother considered it their highest privilege, as well as their sincerest joy, to have given three of their sons to the service of the altar. No doubt they had never heard the word of the great de Bonald who doffed his hat before his son just ordained, saying : « He is now more worthy of reverence than I », but within their hearts they nourished a like conviction. Eulalie had inherited the living faith of her parents.

She beheld in the priest the ambassador of God, hence on all occasions, she manifested her respectful regard, for clergymen, surrounding them with every courteous attention that entered within the scope of her duties. Her kind acts were so unobtrusive, so simply natural, that it seemed as if in her ministrations all the pleasure accrued to her alone. Messrs. Lecours and Archambault appear to have been among the most constant among the reverend guests who frequented the rectory during Miss Durocher's stay. In after years they could not sufficiently testify their appreciation of the tireless, painstaking attentiveness, that caused them to look back upon the parochial residence at Belœil, as a second home.

« During a sojourn of eighteen months at the rectory in Belœil », says Rev. Mr. Lecours, « I had ample time in which to judge of the eminent qualifications of Miss Durocher, and to gauge the merit of this truly elect soul. I was among the number who oftenest enjoyed her skilful aid, often enough, indeed, to have tested her patience to its limits ». « She was a true sister of charity », says Rev. Mr. Archambault. « She knew how to

obtain by gentle persistence the use of a prescription promising in its effects ; with ability and forethought she prepared light, appetizing food, and possessed the secret of compounding a number of helpful medicaments from simples. Her aptitude as nurse was equalled only by her unassuming reserve. We seldom saw her except at meal times or when she brought some prescribed dose or tonic. Rev. Mr. Lecours can vouch for my statement as to the untiring care given us both, when, worn out with our professorship at the college of St. Hyacinth, Mr. Durocher welcomed us cordially to his home, and Miss Eulalie restored us to health. Devotedness such as hers, a kindness that never wearied, surely denotes the possession of a heart animated with love of God. »

Eulalie's multiplied duties were not allowed to interfere with her practice of the interior life. To the frequently preoccupying labors of Martha, she joined the meditative spirit of Mary. Her duty as house-mistress discharged, she withdrew to her own apartments, or oftener still, to the Church. These were her coveted moments ; visits to the sanctuary entered into her rule of life, because, in

order that nothing in her daily routine should be left to chance, she had drawn up with the help of her Director, definite regulations to which she faithfully adhered. Prayer and action coming at foreseen times, counted among the steps by which her heart sought day by day to rise heavenwards. Ever happy in the obscure but peaceful way of life so congenial to her tastes, she eluded even the suggestion of being appreciated. Rev. Mr. Odelin, who occasionally wrote verses, sent her, one day, a crucifix with a little poem containing an allusion to her virtuous aspirations. Courteously as usual, Eulalie accepted the gift; she retained the crucifix but lost no time in burning the rhymes.

While ably seconding the hospitable inclinations of her brother, she aided him no less in his efforts to relieve illness or misfortune among the members of his flock. Instinctively she loved the poor, entering with easy sympathy into their troubles. But her sympathy did not confine itself to an offering of intermittent service, or putting alms into an outstretched hand. According to the testimony of eye-witnesses, she personally visited the needy and the ailing; she relieved their most pressing

wants within the limit of the means at her disposal, sought to remedy their ills, dressed their hurts and sores when necessary, found employment for persons out of work, and with gentle words endeavored to mitigate the present distress of all who appealed to her kindness, by inducing them to cultivate a patient resignation to the decrees of the Divine Will.

She often entrusted her errands of mercy to young children, so that early in life, they might learn to think of the misfortunes of people less favored than themselves, and to take an interest in providing means of relief. « One day, when yet a child », says a lady, « I was passing in front of the rectory, when Miss Durocher called me to wait a moment. «Will you carry this little basket to Mr. C... and tell him that I shall not be able to see him this afternoon. » This Mr. C... was a poor man whose wife and children were ill at the time ; needless to say, the basket was filled with wholesome and palatable food to tempt the invalids.

The Reverend Rector had given Miss Eulalie a free hand in all neighborly ministrations of this kind. She made use of the privilege and bestowed,

on her own part, the more welcome gift of personal service, « the alms of the heart ». Soon, she was surnamed « mother of the indigent, the visible guardian angel of the parish. » The unseen Spirit of Light who guided the steps of this visible angel made its presence felt. Her deeds of mercy, borne to the realm above, were changed into gems for her future crown.

Miss Durocher's highly prized compensation amid her duties was to care for the altars; like her brother, she glowed with zeal for the habitation of the Lord and studied to render it more attractive to the worshippers. Her efforts in this direction were marked by the carefulness born of her faith, her respect for the Holy Place, her burning love for Jesus and Mary. She had never consented to wear a flower to enhance her own attractions, — for the sanctuary there were never too many in her eyes. As the greater festivals drew near, she designed decorations at once graceful and striking. Bouquets, clusters, garlands of flowers, amid which hidden lights glittered, it was her delight to devise. For many years afterwards, the altar adornments of the Church at Belœil were mentioned as offering

a standard seldom surpassed. In years yet hidden, when Eulalie will have become a foundress and superior of a community, her artistic skill in the adornment of the sanctuary will be transmitted to her Sisters, who will religiously cherish this heritage of taste and skill bequeathed by their venerated Mother.

In her necessary contact with the outside world, and in her visits of charity, Miss Durocher whose outlook was clear and practical, soon found reason to deplore the want of efficient provision for common school instruction. In fact, popular education at that period had sunk to a low ebb. Never entirely general even under the French domination, after Canada had passed under the English rule, it had to struggle anew into existence, and afterwards to defend its right to live. The situation in the second quarter of the nineteenth century was still unpromising. By the Articles of Cession, England had, it is true, agreed that common school instruction in Quebec should be imparted in the French language, but the new rulers were more than apathetic in advancing the educational interests of the subdued Province. Little or nothing had

been done to establish a pratical system of public instruction in the prevailing tongue. Strangers from Europe remarking on this state of things, could not suppress their astonishment. One of these travellers, the Duke de la Rochefoucault, had gone so far as to affirm that a Canadian Frenchman who knew how to read was almost a phenomenon. John Lambert wrote: « These French-Canadians have a natural good sense and a judgment beyond the ordinary; but, owing to the lack of proper schools, they can obtain no regular instruction ». Schoolhouses in the less populated districts, besides being uncomfortable and ill-equipped, were scattered at considerable distances. The few pupils were irregular in attendance. Several localities remained totally without schools; hence, the instruction acquired was, with rare exceptions, meagre in quantity as well as poor in quality. Professional teachers found little encouragement; in their stead, wandering school-masters made their way through the villages, remaining in some places no longer than five or six days at a time, and returning at intervals of as many months. What appreciable benefit could result from this

lamentable state of affairs? A unique, though primitive method was pursued when it became necessary to favor children preparing for first Holy Communion and Confirmation. Little aspirants dwelling in the same neighborhood, assembled each day to the number of ten or more, at the house of some painstaking and kindly disposed person, usually a woman. Sometimes, the self-appointed instructor would perhaps be a grandparent who, by good fortune, had learned reading and writing in youth, or had spent a year, more or less, in a Convent boarding-school. The group of scholars gathered in a circle around the instructor, who with unwearying patience had them repeat at first in concert, and then individually, the definitions of the catechism. Ten repetitions, fifteen, even more if required, were faithfully heard, till the little volume had been committed to memory, and its contents could be recited both question and answer, from cover to cover. Certain expedients were employed to awaken emulation among the learners. As soon as one of the apter pupils had learned an answer thoroughly, he or she was allowed to leave the circle in triumph, to loiter at the windows whence the familiar work

of the farm could be watched with interest; or they could mark, within the apartment itself, the struggles and failures of less gifted scholars. Perhaps, too, they could engage in chat or, after the fashion of learners everywhere, play practical jokes on the dullards who took overlong to learn. Such a method of instruction called for untiring zeal on the part of the catechists, while the children often remained without other book-learning, and this, it will be admitted, was very little. Justice demands us to say, however, that every page of the catechism so learned was minutely examined and exhaustively explained by the Pastor, or his curate, so that the Canadian people, logical and intelligent by nature, remained singularly enlightened in the practice of their faith, free from all forms of superstition or erratic devotion. Their priesthood and their religious orders were recruited from among these people who, once given opportunity to improve, expanded mentally and assimilated knowledge with the swiftness of seed newly planted in a virgin soil free from weeds, and ready for the hand of the cultivator. Many influential members of this pioneer priesthood, founders of par-

ishes, have left an undying memory of holiness to their people, as well as of a far-sighted perspicacity in practical affairs, that rendered them most efficient leaders for the agricultural people from whose ranks they had sprung.

Miss Durocher was distressed to see so many young girls unable to obtain even the rudiments of education, yet possessing abilities full of promise, did an opportunity present itself for their development. Her active interest in the betterment of conditions affecting the common people sought for a means to dispel the prevailing ignorance, in so far as the term ignorance may characterize the mere absence of book-learning. For this problem she could discover no human solution ; God, Himself, was about to reveal one.

Spiritual writers affirm that the acquisition of one capital virtue suffices to draw all others into the soul. In the heart of Eulalie Durocher, the queen virtue, Christian charity, dwelt supreme ; its handmaids were in close attendance. Let us pause once again to witness their combined activity in promoting her spiritual growth. It must not be imagined that, in spite of her self-forgetfulness,

obstacles and contradictions did not abound. First of all, her physical frailness kept her subject to ever new forms of suffering, the secret of which she hid within her own consciousness, never complaining, never seeking for sympathy, never deferring duty to its claims, but always presenting to onlookers a smilingly cheerful aspect. During early times at the rectory, she was quite at the mercy of servants whose bitter tongues and fretful criticism made life a severe trial. Far from endeavoring to have them dismissed, — which would have required but a word, — she manifested towards them an unvarying kindness, studied their comfort, favored them with little gifts, and when she had none left to bestow, she obtained for them, from her brother, a coveted leave of absence, or some other privilege that satisfied her desire of returning good for evil.

Household annoyances and carping comments on her mode of action, though painful, were not in these years her chief source of uneasiness. A keener trial gave pain at almost every moment. Her delicate nature found its closest torment, can it be credited ? in the brother she loved so loyally. Rev. Mr. Durocher had justly acquired the reputa-

tion of being a gentleman and a holy ecclesiastic. In outward bearing, he was grave, thoughtful, dignified. When in company, his expression became softened and was tempered by exquisite manners and an affable benevolence, but as master of the house, his more austere aspect checked the spontaneous freedom of familiar intercourse. Not seldom do we meet with persons addicted to serious pursuits, who exhibit a winning cordiality towards passing strangers, while they seem quite unapproachable amongst their own. A sensitive temperament like that of Miss Durocher, careful in details and wishing, if not to win approval, at least to avoid giving annoyance, suffers in contact with these self-contained natures. Altogether devoted to duties that demanded foresight and self-control, this reserve on the part of her brother easily became onerous. At first, she used to scrutinize her own behavior to see if possibly she might find in herself some reason for being kept at a distance. Though she discovered nothing where nothing existed, she persuaded herself that some part of her management must be defective. A grievance of this nature, trifling at first, grows unbearable

by constant recurrence of its cause, the influence of which is all the more depressing because continually present and unescapable. A hasty reply, a too curt command, an unduly prolonged silence, all conduced to mar the serenity of our sufferer, conscious meanwhile of giving out only her best. Under the stress of this impression, her strength gradually gave way. An increasing loss of color, the silent tears she could not always hide, were at last remarked by her father, who ascribed her distress to some struggle with a sensitive conscience. At last he questioned and, with her usual directness, she revealed the source of her sorrow. Without delay Mr. Durocher conferred with his son, and that son's affliction can readily be surmised. He could not forgive himself for grieving a sister so dear and so justly deserving. Years afterwards, the tears would come to his eyes when he recalled this time of misunderstanding, and, after a mutual explanation, no effort was spared to make Miss Durocher forget his seeming want of appreciation. Moreover, he conceived a project to lessen her isolation. Aware of her esteem for a Miss Mélodie Dufresne, a young woman of similar ideals, he

invited this young lady to rëside in the rectory and thus afford his sister a congenial companion.

Miss Dufresne, born in the parish of Belœil, was the eldest daughter of respectable, well-to-do farmers. Like Eulalie, she had aspired to become a Sister of the Congregation and, like her also, feeble health proved an insurmountable barrier when she sought the fulfilment of her desire. Artistic in her tastes, she was proficient in drawing and painting ; and skilful in plain and ornamental needle-work. No doubt the friendship had grown while both were engaged in adorning the altars, and mending or making the priestly vestments. But their mutual attraction was partly based on the law of contrast. Miss Dufresne, ardent, enthusiastic, easily carried away by her convictions, inclined towards a sometimes disconcerting frankness in the expression of her ideas. Naturally attracted towards an austere holiness of life, she failed, now and then, to understand why others sought pleasanter paths, and this occasioned a certain severity in judging, more likely to discourage than to draw souls heavenward by the cords of love. Besides, she was outspoken in her

strictures on the positive wrong doing, even the shortcomings usual to weaker natures. Merciless to her own failures, she found it difficult to conceive how any one could tolerate weakness whether in self or others. Yet the two friends possessed the same loftiness of principle, an equal blamelessness in conduct, and a like desire of striving to realize the highest ideal in Christian perfection. Moreover, Miss Dufresne was convinced of her own inferiority to Eulalie in spiritual things. Humbly, till the end of life, she would repeat: « Miss Durocher was so good, while my nature was so rebellious to discipline ». By joining these dissimilar though kindred souls in a close and lasting attachment, God willed to prepare them for united effort in the work they were to initiate for the accomplishment of His designs. Besides, in time, the strong sturdy material furnished by the temperament of Miss Dufresne, became, under the hand of the Great Artist, a work of marvellous beauty. In her latest years, she grew indulgent and easy to please. All the affection pent up by years of self-denial escaped its bounds and, under the melting influence of Divine love, manifested itself by a compassionate

tenderness. God everywhere, God in every one, God in everything, such was the transformation wrought by grace in the virile soul of Miss Durocher's chosen companion. While residing together under the same roof, the two friends rivalled one another in the desire for progress along the narrow way. To prepare for the vows of religion, which always they hoped to assume, they began to practise the virtues these vows presuppose. Eulalie relinquished all superfluities in dress, retaining only what was strictly needful to do honor to her position. By degrees, her outfit diminished in favor of the poor, though, as it sometimes happened, this despoilment caused her no little confusion. The Durochers being accustomed to frequent the best society of the time, Miss Eulalie found admittance to the inner circles of the old nobility. The Seigneur de Rouville still resided in St. Hilaire and exercised, at the Manor House, an openhanded hospitality. When invited to some social function which she could scarcely refuse to attend, Miss Durocher at length saw herself reduced to dependence on others for most of the minor adornments that add to the attractiveness of a lady's belongings.

Everything in her demeanor bespoke an angelic purity of soul. As for obedience, she put it into practice from morning till night, — obedience to her rule of life, to her director, to her father and brother. In each new occurrence she endeavored to discern the will of the Most High. Soon, she embraced with truly heroic persistence the practice of corporal penance, and submitted her frail body to rigors that one hesitates to contemplate. A girdle of hair cloth was constantly worn beneath her garments. On the days of penance set apart by Holy Church, it was exchanged for rude chains which she twined about her body, her lower limbs and her arms. Frequently she scourged herself with a branched chainlet, armed with points where the links joined. This scourge was used unmercifully till, as testified by Miss Dufresne, accidentally a witness, the flowing blood stained the floor of her room. In early youth, she had already begun to exercise the severities of a penitential spirit. When questioned at St. Antoine by the physician who, in one of her attacks of exhaustion, was summoned to examine into her condition, she acknowledged these austerities. After the example

of her mother, she rose at night to pray, and sometimes, during winter, walked barefoot through the snow. Some of these self-chastisements were then interdicted altogether and others modified, especially fast and abstinence. The physician stated afterwards, that she submitted without question to his directions; already she knew that obedience is better than sacrifice.

When, subsequent to what has been related above, her Reverend brother had become increasingly considerate in his dealings, she observed to her friend: «Just see, the Rector finds everything I do exactly right, my father is tenderness itself, – every one seems to approve my work. What likeness have I to Our Lord, who was always subject to contradiction?» This acknowledgment of the tribute to her influence, then uttered to express gratitude towards her brother, shows also the regret she felt at having lost a source of sacrifice; but her words were true, nevertheless. She had indeed won the respect and confidence of the whole parish; her name was mentioned only with veneration. Her lovable piety attracted even little children; the smaller girls,

after school, ran to the church to see her pray, or to offer help if she were engaged in decorating the altars. Daughters of the most estimable and refined families sought her society and, after having submitted to the charm of her personality, tried almost invariably to model their lives on hers. Several of these young ladies afterwards embraced the religious life, either under her spiritual guidance or in other congregations. One of their number who, in after years, filled the office of Superior in the General Hospital of Quebec, wrote : « Miss Durocher gave to every one a high idea of her worth. She was considered to be a person of very perfect life ; her piety was gentle and well regulated, her conversation cheerful and winning. We never left her company without carrying away with us a desire for self-improvement ».

Rev. Mr. Eusèbe Durocher also held his sister in high esteem. After her death, when speaking to a member of the Sisterhood, at the time on duty in the convent opened at Belœil, he said : « All through this parish, my sister was looked upon as a saint. The pew you occupy in the church is sanctified by her prayers. On the eve of great festivals, she

remained praying all night long. I sometimes took a seat behind the altar to watch how she spent the hours with God. After a whole day at work, standing, and allowing herself only bread and water for refreshment, she communed with Our Lord all through the night. I have always entertained a deep and unbounded respect for her character ; her constant piety was an example to every member of the Congregation ».

Many similar testimonials to her worth could be cited ; we shall mention but one more, a summary of all the others and authoritative in itself because of the speaker's position as chief pastor of the diocese. « She dwelt among seculars », says Bishop Bourget, « as if already in the convent, sanctifying her spirit by all the means that conduce to the perfection of a Christian life. She diffused through the parish of Belœil the perfume of her virtues, and won a deserved reputation for holiness by the constant practice of good deeds. »

IV

WE have now reached the year 1841. Eulalie has spent nearly a decade in the rectory of Belœil. Important events, bearing on the relations of Canada with England, have marked this interval. The Canadian Parliament has presented stirring scenes. The people, roused to indignation by the rulings of 1837, had taken up arms and encountered the British forces at St. Denis, St. Charles and St. Eustache. The two places first named are in the close neighborhood of Belœil. Homesteads in ashes, the penalties of military execution and the scaffold, the remembrance of prisoners languishing in exile, had brought sorrow to many a household. Amid storm and stress a new era began; the French Canadians at last obtained what they had fought for, — a responsible government.

In the sphere of Church affairs, Bishop Bourget had been appointed to succeed Bishop Lartigue, who died in 1840. The diocese of Montreal, at this date, comprised the present dioceses of Ottawa, St. Hyacinth, Sherbrooke, Valleyfield, Joliette, Pembroke and the Vicariate of Temiscaming. Among its most pressing needs was that of finding priests and missionaries to found new parishes, and to evangelize the Indians. Besides, it became absolutely indispensable to obtain religious teachers to organize the work of elementary education. The Sisters of the Congrégation de Notre-Dame were the only Catholic educators for girls then in the field, and, as yet, they had under direction only thirteen houses in the entire province of Quebec. The Brothers of the Christian Schools were of recent arrival, four years having elapsed since their setting out from France.

Bishop Bourget, in his pastoral letter of April 1841, explained the situation and addressed a touching appeal to his people. While deploring the lack of laborers in Christ's vineyard, he proposed to cross over to Europe for the purpose of laying the needs of his diocese before the Holy Father, awakening

THE RT. REV. IGNATIUS BOURGET
BISHOP OF MONTREAL

an interest in his work, and enlisting, if possible, the services of missionaries, both priests and nuns. On his way towards Rome, Providence led him to Marseilles where he made acquaintance with the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, recently established for the missions by the saintly prelate, Right Rev. Eugène de Mazenod. To this zealous Founder, the Bishop of Montreal represented his urgent necessity for priests, and he obtained from him four zealous ecclesiastics, the Reverend Fathers Honorat, Lagier, Telmon and Baudrant, O. M. I. These missionaries reached Montreal on the second of December 1841.

For Miss Durocher, this event hastened the hour of God. Some time had elapsed since her director, Rev. Mr. Odelin, rector of St. Hilaire, had been summoned to his eternal reward. Bishop Bourget assigned the vacant parish to the incoming Oblates, Rev. Father Telmon being appointed pastor. Belœil and St. Hilaire stand facing each other on opposite sides of the Richelieu. Rev. Mr. Durocher, with customary hospitality, invited his new Reverend neighbor to spend some weeks at Belœil while making a study of the place and its require-

ments. As a consequence, Eulalie learned to reverence this missionary; and, since he was filling the place of Father Odelin, she confided to him the direction of her spiritual life. The new director readily perceived that he had before him a soul marked with the seal of a Divine predilection. He advised his penitent to make without further delay the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, and, moreover, gave her once again the hope of joining some religious community. Great was her joy! The dream of years seemed about to be realized. With renewed ardor, she undertook the practice of her cherished virtues, — humility, penitential works, disengagement from things of earth. Throwing herself more entirely into God's hands, she submitted to His will, meanwhile rapidly winning the esteem of Father Telmon. Twenty-four years later, writing from France whither he had returned, he expresses himself as follows: « I have retained the highest appreciation of Miss Durocher's virtue and of her holy life. I regret my inability to remember all that I remarked in her exterior conduct, and still further in the spiritual progress of her predestined soul. I have every

reason to believe that she had never become acquainted with evil, nor had she been consciously guilty of a grievous fault.

Her purity of soul mirrored itself in a countenance ever serene and cheerful. To the candor of a child she united a surprising steadfastness of purpose. I never once remarked in her a movement of impatience or a sign of annoyance. She was most respectful in manner towards her father and brother, always busy, always ready to be serviceable ; truly charitable, assiduously given to prayer, penitential without any outward show of austerity, filled with a living faith and a tender love for Our Lord Jesus Christ whom she received frequently in the Holy Communion. I retain a most valued remembrance of her personality, and I hope she intercedes for me near Jesus and Mary whom she ardently loved ».

Miss Durocher, meanwhile, continued to pursue her zealous and gentle apostleship among young girls, her chosen friends and companions. Father Telmon, during a mission which he preached at Belœil, proposed to organize these young women into a sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The

project being a novel one, some little opposition was encountered on the part of Rev. Mr. Durocher who brought forward several objections. But, in due time, all difficulties being smoothed away, the sodality obtained a solemn canonical sanction on the 25th of May 1842, and Miss Eulalie Durocher was appointed first President. It was the earliest association of its kind established in Canada.

The deceased Rector of St. Hilaire, Father Odelin, did not hesitate to affirm, in speaking of Miss Durocher, that he had seldom met a person of more sane and upright judgment, nor one more skilful in leading others towards the adoption of the principles that govern a truly Christian life. In the discharge of her new honorary functions, she proved the truth of his assertion. Her wise and consistent leadership gave a favorable development to the Sodality which grew in importance and became wonderfully active in promoting Catholic ideals of conduct. At once, the joy and the pride of the parish, it proved itself a nursery for religious vocations, as well as a source of social enjoyment for young women who, without any attraction except for home and its tasks, were

nevertheless devout in aspiration, and qualified to leaven society by the example of their quiet, serious, prayerful lives.

Miss Durocher constantly deplored the little she could do to further the cause of elementary instruction. She would have wished that all young girls might be enabled to obtain the training both of soul and intellect imparted by a convent education ; and always secretly entertained the hope that some religious order would be moved to establish in the various parishes, small convents where no more than two or three Sisters need reside, and where youthful students could obtain the rudiments of instruction under religious safeguards. Culture of the spirit was to keep pace with mental progress, and guide it into safe paths; but the one should not outstrip the other. These thoughts she confided to Father Telmon who, as it happened, was entertaining similar views and looking for means to work out the same plan. His growing knowledge of the country and its population, deepened his distressing conviction that the great majority of children received little instruction save the scant information summarily acquired in

the home or among kindly neighbors. Having recently been delegated to attend the General Chapter of his Order in France, he intended, on his return, if it were possible, to bring back with him into Canada, a colony of Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, established some years before by Bishop de Mazenod, in Marseilles, for a purpose grown imperative in its claims, namely, the education of girls among the less moneyed classes. These Sisters would, he hoped, consent to open in the diocese of Montreal, some few of the minor schools which would respond to the needs of the population in the rural districts, and, in time, recruit their numbers from among the people benefiting by their ministrations. Miss Eulalie would, consent to join them as their first Canadian postulant. This acceptable solution of her problem she welcomed as the fulfilment of her long cherished design.

The Oblates of Mary Immaculate had established their headquarters in Longueuil, whither they had removed in the summer of 1842. Father Telmon laid his scheme before the parish priest of Longueuil, Rev. Mr. Moise Brassard, who acceded to

the plan without demur. Bishop Bourget, when the matter was deferred to his judgment, gave it, with his blessing, his unqualified approval. The parish Board of Trustees at Longueuil having next been consulted, were easily won over, and in proof of their good faith, offered to put a house belonging to the church property, at the disposal of the expected Sisters. Everything appeared to be in train, and Father Telmon hopefully set out for France, at the beginning of May 1843. But he had been too sanguine in his expectations. The Sisters of Marseilles did not favor his proposals. They shrank from undertaking the far-away mission, such a possibility not having been contemplated by the Foundress who was still at the head of the little Congregation. She declined to let her Sisters cross the ocean. It was a rude check, the undertaking seemed as if nipped in the very bud.

Miss Eulalie, on being informed, did not give way to discouragement. Since the Sisters of Marseilles had refused to come, why not found an Institute without their help? Although she failed to see clearly how such a measure would fit

the requirements, she was confident of success. She disclosed her purpose to the Rev. Théophile, her brother, and told him in concluding : « You have been so kind that I am too happy here. To ensure my salvation, I believe myself called to give up the comforts I enjoy, and to undertake something really difficult for God's service ». Then she discussed the working out of the new foundation as she had conceived of it long before.

Mr. Théophile could not conceal his amazement. He held his sister to be an angel of piety. In a subordinate position, he considered her equal to any one with whom he was acquainted, but he had not yet sought in her his ideal as foundress of a religious congregation. Impossible for him to consent that she should engage in such a hazardous enterprise ! He believed it incumbent on him to affirm his opinion with a clearness and freedom that he hoped might destroy the fanciful design at its inception. As Miss Durocher did not bow to his decision, or relinquish her design, he not seldom emphasized his disapproval by hurtful sarcastic allusions, even in presence of casual guests and fellow-clergymen. Among the latter, Miss

Eulalie's untried vocation found few defenders. Scarcely can we blame them. To-day, that the work has grown and prospered beyond all prevision, it is easy to say what ought to have been their attitude. But, at that time, everything being more than doubtful, nothing having borne the test of years and trial, this action on the part of the Rector and his friends was both salutary and wise; it rendered evident the providential origin of the plan.

Still, sarcasm inflicts a wound. It bears hard on a sensitive nature, especially when its author is tenderly loved, and the strictures undeserved. Consolation in this fresh affliction was sought, as usual, near the Tabernacle, and strength obtained in the Blessed Eucharist. Though bitterly disappointed in failing to obtain her brother's approval, Miss Durocher made no complaint, convinced as she was, that her own unworthiness had drawn upon her a fresh defeat. While abasing herself more entirely before God, she redoubled her works of penance. But penitential practices were soon prohibited, being looked upon as the source of her seemingly illusive fancies, and again she submitted

without question to the authority of her spiritual advisers.

Her filial tenderness was also assailed. Mr. Durocher, distressed in contemplating a departure that would affect his claim on a daughter's care and devotion, spoke sadly of the real privation to which he would be subjected without apparent reason. Believing himself to be on the edge of the tomb, quite unwilling to relinquish the hope of enjoying his cherished Eulalie's company and unremitting attentions during his latest years, he pleaded with her in moving terms : « My child, wait at least till I am gone. You know I gave up my home and came here to have you near me, always. Besides, you can easily see that the Rector himself is failing, and no one is so well able to care for him as you ». In fact this latter plea was well founded. About that time, the Rev. Mr. Durocher had fallen into a state of debility so pronounced, that fears were entertained for his restoration to health. Words fail to expresss Miss Durocher's anguish of mind under such close attacks upon her tenderness. But the Divine Hand that dealt these afflictions, upheld her courage by an assistance

so marked, that never for a moment did she entertain the idea of failure, much less, despair of being consecrated to the service for which, in God's providence, she felt herself ultimately destined.

Her brother Eusèbe, just then filled the office of rector in a near-by parish, St. Athanase. On learning of his sister's new proposal, he did not fail to join forces with the opposition. He observed to his sister one day : « Since you insist that you are called to become a nun, why not choose a community already established? Why not enter among the Grey Sisters? » Always prepared to consider any apparent indication of God's will, this idea lingered in her mind ; nevertheless, she could not shake off the conviction that, in order to comply with the promptings of the Holy Spirit, a teaching foundation must be undertaken at Longueuil. Here, its beginnings, however humble, would be efficiently tested under the eye of the Oblate Fathers, who had, from the first, encouraged her design. One day by a heaven-sent impulse she referred the matter to her Reverend brother, Eusèbe, in the confessional. Judge of her astonishment when, in reply to her consultation, she heard

him declare : « My dear sister, you can certainly save your soul by joining the Grey Sisters, but you will not do half the good you could accomplish at Longueuil. However, should you decide on Longueuil, prepare yourself to encounter difficulties of every kind ».

Her anxieties were lifted. This decisive word uttered where a priest speaks in the name of God, alone, determined her resolve to delay no longer.

On the sixteenth of October 1843, Miss Durocher presented herself at the Novitiate of the Oblate Fathers in Longueuil, to witness the religious profession of her third brother, now a priest. In the course of that day, after an interview with Bishop Bourget and the Rev. Father Telmon, the purposed foundation became definitive. It was decided that she should leave Belœil, within the least possible delay, to begin her novitiate. She was to be associated in the work with her friend and confidante, Miss Mélodie Dufresne, and a third young woman of considerable experience as a teacher, then resident at Longueuil and in charge of a school, but already prepared by the Oblate Fathers to embrace the prospective

enterprise, no matter how unpromising the outlook for success from a worldly point of view.

When these details had been discussed and thoroughly settled, Miss Eulalie Durocher returned to her brother's rectory to hasten the preparations for her final departure. She was piously impatient to break any last ties that attached her to the world outside. Nor was it a sacrifice. Long had her soul yearned to repeat with the Psalmist: « Lord, thou hast broken my bonds ».

The following note she addressed to Miss Dufresne, then absent from the rectory on a visit to her own relatives.

« Belœil, October 18th, 1843.

Jesus, Mary, Joseph and St. Teresa. Praised be the Sacred Heart of Jesus !

My dear Sister,

I have made a happy journey. Let us bless the Divine Providence that has cared for us so well. The ceremony of profession was very beautiful. Our good Father Durocher is now a religious and, I trust, a fervent religious. We,

Sister, must prepare to walk in his footsteps. Our Divine Lord desires to count us among his chosen followers, each bearing a long and beautiful cross. I hope our courage will not fail. Our spiritual Father has not changed his mind concerning our future.....

I had quite a long interview with the Bishop ; He wishes decisively to have an establishment in Longueuil. In this desire, he is seconded by the Superior of the Oblates, so that I consider it necessary that you should join me here to-morrow. In the case of its being difficult to come at once, begin a novena to Mary Immaculate..... Should you be obliged to delay, be resigned. Speak as little as possible of your reason for leaving home. You can write a full explanation at some later time.

Farewell, my dear, till to-morrow. I am with you in the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. »

Ten days afterwards, on the 28th of October, Miss Durocher and Miss Dufresne crossed the threshold of the Novitiate in Longueuil.

Part II

LIFE OF MOTHER MARY ROSE IN RELIGION

PARISH CHURCH
LONGUEUIL
1811 – '84

FIRST RESIDENCE AND CONVENT

I

THE habitation offered by the church-wardens of Longueuil for lodging the future community of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, and in which on the evening of October 28, 1843, the first three members found themselves reunited, was the parish school house. Miss Céré, the third of the three aspirants, had taught here and fulfilled the duties of Principal for some years, to the satisfaction of pupils and patrons. It is time to make her acquaintance. By descent, Miss Céré belonged to a distinguished Breton-French family, Céré de la Colombière. She had already passed her first youth, – being, in 1843, about forty years of age, – was of a practical turn of mind, outspoken, and authoritative. In her twenties, she had made a trial of the religious life at the Hôtel-Dieu, Montreal; but the care of the sick having made

no appeal to her aptitudes, she returned home and prepared herself to embrace the career of teaching without affiliation with any religious body. Her position as head of a school, held without intermission during several years in Longueuil parish, is the surest tribute to her methods and her ability. An active zeal for the Catholic training of the scholars, having its source in her own spirit of faith, won the general esteem. Besides, there was something altogether womanly and great-hearted in her dealings with children. When in trouble, they felt that in recurring to her, both hands and heart would open to them in sympathy. A tender consoler in hours of sorrow, she was visited even to her latest years, by elderly ladies who came, as in school-days, for counsel and comfort. It was a pleasure to witness the joyful respect with which they greeted her. Moreover, to look upon her bearing, her dignity, and the ever-perceptible consciousness of her life-purpose, conveyed the impression of a soul for whom God's interests were highest and surest in their claim.

In the parish school, her own younger sister helped as an associate-teacher. This young lady

joined the foundresses at first, but withdrew after a few months. The school taught by the Misses Céré registered, at the time of beginning the new Institute, thirteen boarders and a fair number of day-scholars.

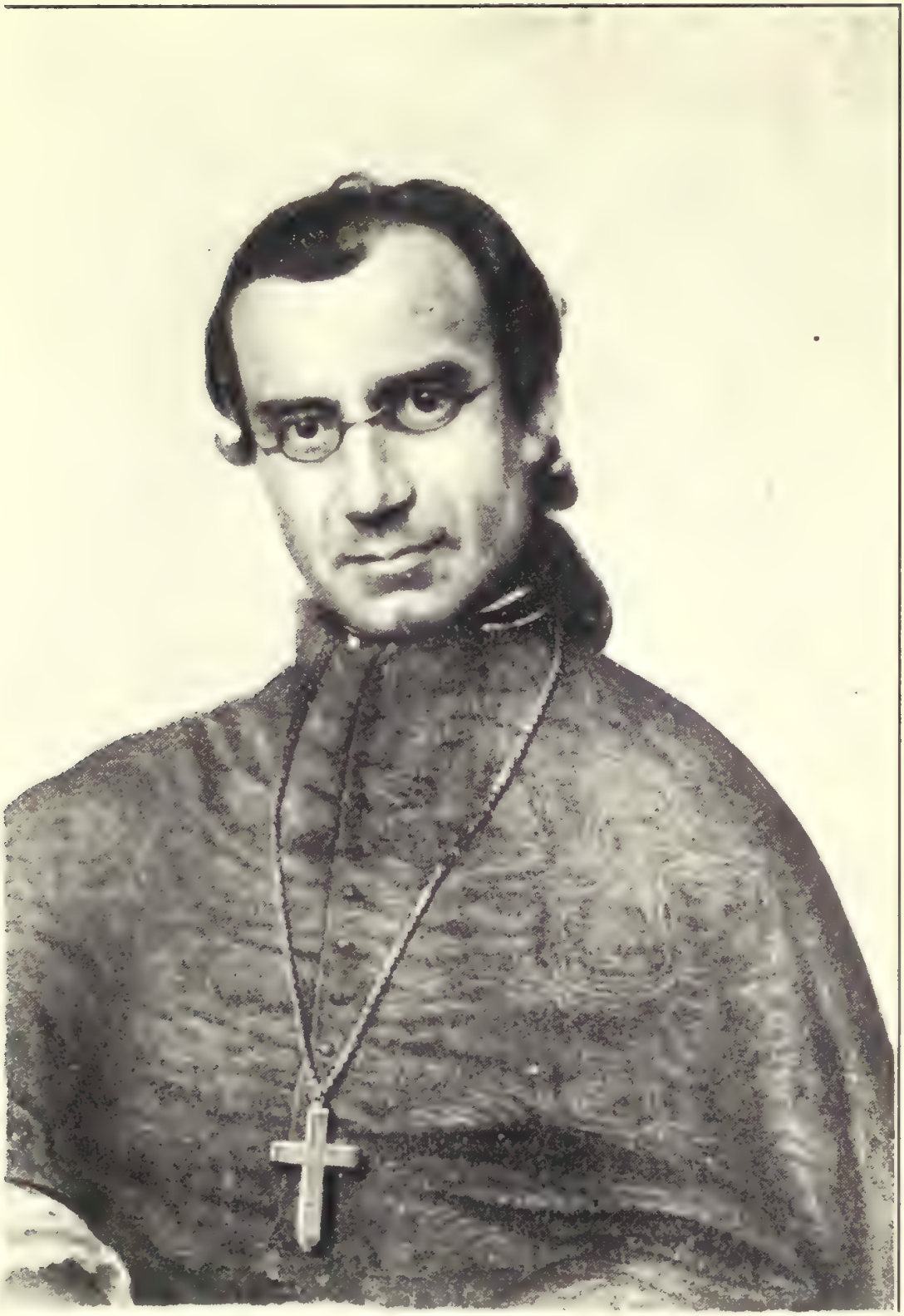
The Misses Durocher and Dufresne having arrived, the day-pupils were given a short leave of absence, and the three candidates began the exercises of a retreat intended as a preparation for their new life. An Oblate, whose name will often recur in this memoir, Rev. Father Jean-François Allard, came twice a day to direct the retreatants. His efforts tended to familiarize them with the difficulties of the work they were about to undertake, and to imbue their minds with an unshakable confidence in God. Indeed, most intimately did they feel their need of leaning heavily on Divine Providence. Without resources, almost without experience, they were about to inagurate a work intended to be solid, useful and lasting, — the foundation of a community that would do its part towards promoting the knowledge and service of God by extending to His little ones the benefit of education.

On the 31st, at evening, the Rev. Father Honorat, Superior of the Oblates, came in person to close the spiritual exercises, and to offer to the Lord these first fruits of the future Congregation. The morrow witnessed their formal entrance into the religious life.

The little convent almost faced the parish church. More precisely, it stood on the spot formerly occupied by one of the towers of the old Fort at Longueuil, and had probably been built up from the stones of that demolished edifice. It is even possible that the foundations were those of the ancient fortress itself. (1)

The original fort constructed by Charles Lemoyne, Seigneur of the County, had often given shelter to the colonists against their implacable savage enemies, the Iroquois. The foundresses drew from this circumstance a favorable omen. They knew that their country, then untroubled by barbarous foes, must none the less be on the alert to repel ignorance, the insidious enemy of the intellect. « Therefore », they declared, « the authorities insist on building houses which, in turn, will

(1) This house, over two hundred years old, still subsists.



THE MOST REV. J. F. ALLARD, O. M. I.

NOVICE MASTER OF COFOUNDRESSES

become invincible fortresses of enlightenment, where the youth of our day may arm themselves with intellectual and moral weapons to render them fearless in the struggle for all that softens and illumines life. May we, though feeble instruments, contribute our humble share towards attaining this end. »

With this purpose in view to urge them more rapidly onward, they were set to work in earnest. Study, class-duties, prayer, one followed the other in regular sequence. Miss Céré, already familiar with the organization and the discipline of a school, retained the headship ; the two other candidates submitted without demur to her dictates. Doubtful points, they referred to the Oblate Fathers who set them right and gave the direction required. It must be remembered that the Oblates of Mary Immaculate were not only rectors and missionary priests, they were also skilled in teaching. They conducted colleges and seminaries in their native France, where they had acquired much of that national culture and practical knowledge which they possesed the art of communicating in a lively impressive manner. No doubts can be

entertained of the versatile ability shown by these cultivated French gentlemen. They could, by turns, prove themselves skilful musicians, architects, builders, school-managers, while at all times they were exemplary, eloquent clergymen, wholly on fire with zeal for souls. Through the first followers of Miss Durocher, the educational impress of the Oblates was stamped upon the Institute whose work she set in movement. Contact with these experienced educators put the associates of Mother Mary Rose in possession of many teaching devices afterwards most useful to them as instructors, and helpful in the training of young girls who were to be prepared for the duties of actual life. The methods then in vogue in France, always among the most progressive of nations, had superseded the more formal pedagogical ideals of the century just gone by, and as soon as introduced on this side of the water, they gave an equally beneficial impetus to school-work in Quebec. The convent at Longueuil, meanwhile, saw the day which began at 4.30 a. m., finish, as in long-established monasteries, at 9 p. m. The necessity of complying with the exactions of a fixed rule

infused a supernatural energy into the spiritual life of the candidates, and helped them to obtain tangible results. We have already gained some knowledge of the zeal and fervor of the foundresses. Rev. Fr. Allard, at once their chaplain and their professor in pedagogics, was not so constituted as to check their ardor. Under his requisitions, the teachers, when class was over, beeame scholars in their turn. « With what earnest attention we dwelt upon his every word », relate the annals.

The house, suitable enough as accommodations went at the time for a school, was singularly small as a convent. The greater part of the edifice had naturally to be given over to the pupils. In the portion remaining the choicest little room became an oratory, an apartment twelve feet by ten, its only furnishings a few chairs, a crucifix, a table draped with a linen cloth, on that table, a statuette of the Blessed Mother of God, that was all. Yet, how much the foundresses loved their tiny sanctuary ! Miss Eulalie would not have exchanged it for any one of the sumptuous chapels she formerly loved to frequent. Together, within this modest hermitage, the fervent aspirants offered themselves wholly to

the Lord, their only desire being to follow in the way He pointed out. « There we pray ; there, too, we weep at times ; but there, always, we hope. It is the place in which Rev. Father Allard preached our first retreat, and gave out each evening the points of our meditation for the morrow. Within its walls, we recite the Rosary and the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin. The visit to the Blessed Sacrament is made in the church. Soon we hope to have the privilege of attending at the Holy Sacrifice in our humble place of prayer. Then, indeed, will it be precious beyond price. »

The favor of daily Mass and reservation of the Sacred Elements was granted by Bishop Bourget at the end of December. The oratory then changed its appellation, it became the « Chapel ». At first, however, the chapel contained no tabernacle. « The Divine Guest could not, as yet, tarry under our roof. His only tabernacle was the heart of the Sisters », is the quaint, sweet record of the annalist, and she adds : « We repeat to Him so frequently the prayer of His disciples : « Stay with us yet a while », that we know He will end by granting the favor of dwelling among us

always ». This prayer was soon to be answered.

During the month of November, Miss Durocher had found it necessary to return to Belœil to regulate certain family concerns. Her father and her brother at once renewed their persuasions to keep her at home. Moreover, a deputation composed of the chief parishioners of Belœil, came to request that she would locate her new Institute among the people who had long been her devoted adherents. A house was offered for installing the sisterhood. « Since you desire to found an Order, why not remain here where you will be known, encouraged and patronized ? »

To withstand this generous and well-meant offer was a trial comparatively more severe than the attacks previously undergone, but Miss Durocher did not allow her resolve to be shaken. So far as she was concerned, the clear and evident will of God lay in the voice of the Bishop and her director. Both had counselled her to make a beginning elsewhere, hence she returned to Longueuil to resume the exercises of her novitiate in silent labor and self-denial.

The foundresses were at best, very poor ; with

difficulty did they supply even the most pressing needs. In every sense of the word, their life of privation offered little to flatter human satisfaction, while the prospect for material betterment presented still less to inspire confidence in a future as yet uncertain. Heroic epochs such as these mark the beginning of every foundation undertaken through zeal for souls. On looking back to their hard-won triumphs, the pioneers style these times, « the golden age ». Everything is lacking, yet happiness abounds. When genuine love for God blossoms in a heart, it sheds abroad that fragrance of perpetual gladness which will always astonish the world. « Our joy has an inexpressible sweetness » wrote one. « Our recreation hours are so lively and cheerful that we surprise ourselves by the outburts of our own merriment ». This joy is proverbial among the saints. The « dear St. Elizabeth » of Hungary, St. Francis of Assisium, the nature-lover, the witty and tender St. Francis de Sales, to name but a few, lived in the radiant cheer of the children of God ; the eminent St. Teresa insisted upon a restful gayety during the hours of recreation. She wished that « pains should

be taken to gladden the heart, and that every sister should exert her ability to amuse ». Our foundresses afforded no exception to this characteristic attitude of the saints. Hearts at peace with God were theirs. Once free from the claims of duty among the pupils, they met, and casting off all other anxieties, they refreshed their spirits in sisterly intercourse, meanwhile imbibing new ardor for the work entrusted to their willing but oft-times wearied hands.

So far, they were but postulants, wearing their usual secular garb. But the Reverend Novice Master, at last, announced that they would be permitted to assume the holy habit of religion ; he fixed the date of vesting for the twenty-eighth day of February 1844. From the outset, they had decided among themselves that they would adopt the religious costume worn by the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, who had failed to come to Canada from Marseilles, but had written most cordially and had bade the new community « God speed. »

Following the indications given by the Oblate Fathers, the foundresses devised a costume that

was pronounced to be quite suitable for its purpose. The ceremony of clothing took place in the tiny chapel which blossomed into something like splendor, with altar furnishings borrowed from the parish church for the circumstance. Right Rev. Ignatius Bourget, at once the father and Founder of the Community, came in person to officiate. He was accompanied by Rev. Father Honorat, O. M. I., Superior; Rev. Fr. Allard, Novice Master of the candidates, and Rev. Théophile Durocher, Rector of Belœil. The thirteen boarders, amazed and delighted, were also present to witness the novel yet impressive proceedings.

The Bishop briefly but feelingly addressed the postulants, declaring them to be the cornerstone of a house « not made with hands » which would become a vast Institute. They were daughters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, — apostles chosen to diffuse, among the faithful of God's earthly kingdom, a true devotion to these glorious Names. Then, after blessing the habits that lay before him he said : « Henceforward these hallowed garments will constitute a sacred livery, the symbol of your enrollment in the militia of Christ; a

defensive armor against every enemy that may assail you, whether from within or without ». He remitted the habit successively to the waiting candidates, and, while they retired to assume the humble vesture, a voice entoned the hymn : *Jesu corona Virginum*.

After the close of Holy Mass, the new novices, kneeling at the feet of the Bishop, received the names they were henceforth to bear. Miss Eulalie Durocher became Sister Mary Rose ; Miss Mélodie Dufresne, Sister Mary Agnes ; Miss Henriette Céré, Sister Mary Madeleine. Each novice, on rising, uttered a fervent *Deo gratias* and returned to her place, too overcome by grateful emotion to do more than remember that, at last, the way was open towards that final consecration so long and ardently besought of Heaven. The choir, as if to give utterance to their gladness of soul, sang the psalm : *Laudate Dominum omnes gentes*. What if the organ failed to add its deep-toned chords to the heavenly melody ? What if the voices were untrained and few ? The harmonies struck from each innocent penitential spirit, bore upward to the Spouse a celestial symphony whose echoes resound

anew within the soul of every novice who dons, for the first time, the coveted insignia of her consecration to the Holy Names.

Once again, Providence had allotted to Eulalie Durocher a symbolic name. She comments on the fact in one of her letters : — « I am invested with the holy habit, and I am called Sister Mary Rose. May I, indeed, become a rose of fragrant odor for the love of Our Lord Jesus Christ. You will assist me by your prayers to fulfil the obligations imposed by this emblematic name. Walking, as we do, along the same path, let us unite our efforts to overcome the difficulties that may arise. »

Already the little community had been entreated to open its doors to postulants. The first to solicit admission, Miss Salomé Martin, arrived in November. Then a young girl of nineteen, she had chosen this budding Institute, the better to allay her thirst for sacrifice and self-immolation. Other youthful candidates followed in her steps but they soon withdrew, either on the plea of unfavorable health, or through a natural shrinking from the hardships to be encountered. In March, Miss Martin was able to welcome a permanent

companion-postulant, Miss Hedwige Davignon who, for several years past, had been the esteemed friend of Sisters Mary Rose and Mary Agnes. Theirs were kindred souls. They had met for the first time on an occasion which had left an undying remembrance among the dwellers near the Richelieu, — the erection, by Bishop Forbin-Janson, of the Stations of the Cross on Belœil Mountain. This missionary bishop from the old land was an eager apostle of Christ Crucified. Either a mission Cross or the Stations set up in every place to which he accepted the call to preach a mission, perpetuated the memory of his efforts in the cause of his Divine Saviour. Belœil Mountain appeared to him a striking and appropriate pedestal for a crucifix of majestic proportions which would dominate the whole Chambly-Basin, bear witness to the sturdy faith of the people, and propagate devotion to the Passion of our Lord. From the summit of Belœil Mountain the rich farms of the Basin can be seen spread out, like an immense checkerboard of vegetation, the intersections broken here and there with picturesque groups of forest trees and fruit-bearing orchards, while numbers of well-built farm

houses, with their dependencies, speak of a busy, prosperous, contented population.

The project of Bishop Forbin-Janson obtained a ready response from these fervent Canadians, true sons of Mother Church. The Rector of Belœil and the Seigneur de Rouville having undertaken to superintend the execution of the plan, Miss Durocher seconded their efforts by providing what was required for the festival of consecration. On the appointed day, October 6, 1841, nearly thirty thousand people had made their way up the mountain, and were massed upon the borders of the lake which fills a cup-like hollow in a plateau, just below the summit. Four bishops and fifty priests, by their presence, gave an unwonted solemnity to the ceremony. « It was a magnificent demonstration » says an eyewitness. « Men, women, children, attentive and prayerful, formed a crescent around one side of the lake. Suddenly, a boat set out from the opposite bank, heading towards the multitude. Within about a rod from the shore, it stopped. The missionary Bishop arose and addressed the people from this frail embarcation. He spoke of the Cross, its power, its influence

over our lives. 'By the Cross, we reach Heaven, by the Cross we enter that blest abode.' His eloquent commentary summed itself up in the cry : 'To Heaven, by the Cross.'

Then the skiff touched land. The bishops disembarked, the procession formed, and each of the fourteen Stations was blessed, while thousands of voices joined in the stirring hymn : 'Vive Jésus, vive sa Croix !' alternating with a stauza from the *Stabat Mater* : '*Sancta Mater istud agas*' ... The enthusiasm was indescribable. »

When the crowd had melted away, three young women still prolonged their prayer in the Chapel of the Sepulture. These were the Misses Durocher, Dufresne, and Davignon. The two former entered into conversation with Miss Davignon who responded cordially to their advances. Together they followed the path down the mountain and, in separating, expressed the hope of further acquaintance. After that first meeting, they frequently exchanged visits. Miss Davignon belonged to the parish of St. Mathias, a few miles distant from Belœil on the same side of the Richelieu. After hearing of the project that busied the minds

of her new friends, Miss Hedwige expressed her own intention of uniting with them when they joined the expected Sisterhood from Marseilles. Subsequent events having necessitated the modification of this plan, she still adhered to her desire for affiliation with the incipient organization. But her mother formally refused to countenance this hazardous design, and the young girl, in her disappointment, entrusted her cause to Mary Immaculate. « My own beloved Mother », she said to her on the last Saturday she spent at home, « find me the means of reaching Longueuil, else I must set out on foot ». Her petition was heard ; Madame Davignon gave a reluctant consent. Miss Hedwige was taken to Longueuil in the family carry-all, and Sister Mary Rose bade her welcome to the humble home whose austere charm had led the young aspirant to forsake the solid comforts of her own.

In due time, these two postulants became novices ; the former, receiving the appellation, Sister Teresa of Jesus ; Miss Hedwige Davignon, the name, Sister Veronica of the Crucifix. Both were to become a stay and a support to the Con-

gregation, both were destined, in course of years, to discharge the functions of Superior General.

The little community maintained itself in line. Its members were daily becoming familiar with the devout customs inherent to their state of life ; among them subsisted a rivalry as to which should most excel in the practice of virtue. Owing to the assiduous attention given to class work, the pupils advanced rapidly in study ; courtesy of manners and progress in gentle deportment kept pace with mental improvement among them. The silent influence of teachers who lived with God alone in view, imparted depth and conviction to their youthful piety. The Rev. Novice Master appeared to be content with the spiritual growth of his novices who continued humble and docile as heretofore. Bishop Bourget's paternal interest did not abate. He paid frequent visits, prayed with the fervent Sisterhood, exhorted them to put their trust in God. « Yes », he said, in the course of a homily : « If the Lord build not the house, if the Lord fail to put His Hand to the work, vainly shall we endeavor to lay its foundations. You must give yourselves entirely ; refuse Him nothing

that His grace solicits. »

And after like exhortations, the novices redoubled their efforts, their energy, their self-devotion in the pursuit of virtue. A disinterested love for Jesus and Mary became the mainspring of their lives, the sole object of their ambition.

Astonished, and gratified to witness the development in educational matters evident in the new Congregation, the church-wardens of Longueuil began to seek for a house that could be transformed into something better calculated to supply the needs of a convent, than the present narrow abode. Their choice fell upon a building of unhewn stone, that stood on a piece of ground adjoining the site of the rectory. They undertook to effect the alterations deemed indispensable, and hastened the workmen in order to have the enlarged dwelling ready for the return of the pupils after vacation, since, judging from the number of applications for admission, a marked increase might be expected.

The pupils! This choice portion of the flock absorbed the solicitude of the Sisters,– the Christian instruction of young girls being the sole purpose their Congregation had in view. So far, as teachers,

they possessed but little experience, still less acquaintance with methods ; yet, it was essential that a work which they aimed to perpetuate should be grounded, from the commencement, on a safe and solid basis. Nothing should be left to chance. Sister Mary Rose determined to seek a practical training for her teachers among the Brothers of the Christian Schools, everywhere conceded to hold the first rank as educators of youth.

« John Baptist de la Salle », says one of his historians, « is the founder of elementary pedagogics. He compiled its procedure, formulated its rules, embodied them as a whole into a system so reliable, that two hundred years have failed to call for any signal modification. He is the pioneer among those who laid down methods for reaching the mind of children in their first search after knowledge. » (1)

Sister Mary Rose sought to follow in the footsteps of the saintly Founder of the Christian Schools ; she aspired to provide for girls the benefits he had secured to boys. « The children of the rich will always find means of obtaining instruction

(1) Armand Ravelet, Hist. of J. B. de la Salle.

either from tutors or in private schools », she used to say when she was yet Miss Durocher, « Let us look after the poor ».

The school attended for practice by the two teacher-students was attached to the church of St. Jacques, Montreal. At its head was Brother Facile, a man of foresight and executive power who achieved, before his death, an enviable reputation for success as teacher, Superior, and builder of institutions, none of which failed. Moreover, according to the testimony of all who knew him, he was ever a humble, edifying Brother of the Christian Schools.

Brother Facile kept the youthful novices at their task for two consecutive months, during which his never-failing encouragement brought out and developed their native skill. The Brothers in the different grades at St. Jacques, also showed a willing readiness to proffer assistance by carrying out before them, in actual practice, the principles of method and organization that contribute to efficiency in the management of a school. The duty of Sisters Teresa of Jesus and Veronica of the Crucifix was to be present while classes were

in action, and to note the means taken to secure the desired end. Every evening they reduced to writing the result of observations made during the day, and submitted the report to Brother Facile for criticism, or further suggestions. Their purpose was to compile a series of directions that would afterwards help in guiding the Sisters, and to shape the method of teaching in the Congregation. During this inevitable absence from the convent, the two novices, invited to lodge with the Sisters of Providence, enjoyed a cordial hospitality that forged the first link in the chain which has ever since bound the two Congregations in a unity truly fraternal. Neither have the Sisters of the Holy Names forgotten that they owe their earliest training in pedagogy to the Brothers of the Christian Schools. The annals bear witness to their appreciation of the benefit received. Concerning the instruction imparted, we read : — « The Brothers of St. James's School have won an inalienable right to our gratitude for the valuable assistance given to our growing Institute. We shall also retain », they added, « a remembrance that will last as long as the Sisterhood endures, of

the hearty and generous hospitality offered by the kind Sisters of Providence. The name of their Foundress and first Superior, Reverend Mother Gamelin, will ever be graven on our hearts ».

When Sisters Teresa of Jesus and Veronica of the Crucifix came back from « exile » as they termed it, they found their Sister-associates domiciled in the new convent. Bishop Bourget had come to bless the house on Sunday, August 4, 1844. The imposing ceremony occurred after the parochial High Mass. A procession was formed, Sister Mary Rose, bearing the cross, opened the march ; then came the boarding-students and the postulants, followed by the clergy. A number of invited citizens were also in line. Thus, with crucifix in hand, Sister Mary Rose passed over the threshold of the abode where she was soon to be appointed first Superior General, and where, after some years, too few, alas ! she was to leave her work, scarcely more than in germ, to the Almighty Hand that was now with hers on the same cross, the Hand to which she clung with the trust of a child. Her prediction to Miss Dufresne had indeed come true, — the cross was « beautiful and long. »

During the days that ensued, the Sisters dismantled the rooms in the first house. They gazed, not without sorrow, around the empty apartments as they bade a last farewell to the outgrown dwelling, the cradle in which they had experienced that early rapture of happiness attendant upon every life consecrated to highest service.

Soon afterwards, another significant event occurred. On the 18th of August, Brother Garin, O. M. I., newly arrived from Marseilles, had brought from the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, there residing, a copy of the Constitutions, and a doll bearing, in miniature, the actual costume worn by the Sisters of France. The mute little stranger, greeted gayly, was called *sœur Bienvenue* (Sister Welcome). As for the book of Constitutions, henceforward to become their own rule of life, each of the Sisters in turn took the precious volume into her hands and kissed it with affectionate respect.

There was now a more roomy house, the beginnings of method in teaching, refreshment for the interior life in assiduous study of the Constitutions, but as yet, the state of the Congregation

could scarcely be called stable. The Sisters were novices still, an adverse breeze could easily scatter them. Their saintly Bishop put an end to any lurking apprehensions by announcing that he would canonically establish the Congregation on the coming eighth of December 1844, and that he would admit the original three novices to profession of the religious vows on the same date.

These tidings were welcomed with heartfelt gladness. Indeed, these long-tried foundresses, by this time, had been amply prepared for an irrevocable alliance with their Lord. Life, so far, had led them towards this happy resting-place by a rough and thorny path. Nor was the novitiate the least of their trials, — an unfavorable location, incomplete equipment, multiple occupations, extreme lack of all things necessary, and, on the spiritual side, a Novice Master who, far from seeking to smooth down the asperities of the route, had of set purpose led them through the bitter way of humiliation, of self-forgetfulness, of the uprooting of self-love. Sister Mary Rose, even more than others, had been the object of his most captious faultfinding, his most cutting reprimands.

Knowing that she was destined to exercise the functions of Superior, he endeavored to base the new Institute on a deep-laid foundation of humility in the leader destined to embody for all her followers, the spirit that should vivify the Congregation.

We quote from Bishop Bourget : « No sooner was Sister Mary Rose admitted to the novitiate than Rev. Father Allard subjected her to the rudest trials. Though already inured to contradiction by a long experience, she found herself in a new world. She was made to pass through the deep valley of humiliation where human nature finds its death. The Director awakened in her the spirit of Christ, by exacting that utter renunciation which is the first as it is the final step to be taken by those who would follow the Divine Master : « If any one will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me ».

Well do we know that words are powerless to teach this unworldly science ; difficult things are learned only by doing. Practice alone gives a knowledge of that death to nature, so essential to happiness and perfection in the religious state.

This will explain a remark made by Sister Mary Rose to a secular friend of long standing. « Compared with what I am learning to-day, virtue as I knew it in the outside world seems to have been a delusive mirage ». Yet, the secret sufferings were hidden from every human eye. She retained her habitual sweetness and serenity ; her confidence in God was not lessened, and, towards the close of the test, thoroughly convinced of her unworthiness as well as of her inefficiency, she solicited a place among the auxiliary Sisters.

Father Allard could contemplate his work with satisfaction. In reality, he retained till the close of his life, a lively and respectful remembrance of the fervor displayed by these three Canadian novices.

The eighth of December brought its looked-for dawn. Winter reigned, yet a radiant sunlight diffused its cheering influence as if to condone the severity of the season. A heavy fall of snow had seen transformed into objects of beauty every irregularity that could offend the eye. In the heart of the three novices dwelt a joy beyond words. The ceremony of their vesting had taken place in the poor narrow oratory of recently-forsaken

habitation, without other witnesses than the few pupils under their care. The profession of vows was to be solemnized at the parish Church, on one of the chief high festivals, in presence of the entire parish. The event, announced far and near, had naturally arrested the attention of many who, knowing of the Sisters by hearsay, welcomed an opportunity to obtain a surer knowledge of their purpose. Bishop Bourget conducted the ceremonies. The Church, crowded to the doors, presented its most attractive holiday aspect. At the appointed hour, the function began by a solemn procession. The Bishop robed in full pontificals, had for assistant priests, Rev. Moise Brassard, Rector of Longueuil ; Rev. Th. Durocher, Rector of Belœil ; Rev. Father Guigues, Superior ; Father Allard and Father Aubert, O. M. I. The three candidates occupied seats reserved for them near the communion rail. All being ready, the august Sacrifice began. Before the Gradual, Rev. Father Brassard arose in the pulpit and read a Pastoral Letter from the Bishop that canonically sanctioned the new Congregation. It closed as follows : — « Allow us to express the wish that each and all

of our parishes may, one day, happily contain a convent destined to be an abode for one of these religious families that devote their abilities to the instruction of youth. We offer congratulations to the parish of Longueuil, that has assured to itself this advantage, by encouraging an Institute which, to-day, is officially inaugurated under its auspices.»

Rev. Father Guigues, followed with a sermon in harmony with the events of the day. When he had finished speaking, Rev. Father Allard, in cope and stole, formally presented himself before the officiating prelate, and in the name of Holy Church asked that His Lordship would deign to bless and consecrate the virgins whom he, their director, had the honor to present, and to unite them by a spiritual alliance with Jesus Christ, the Son of the Most High.

The ceremonies attending a religious profession moved on, according to the ritual, like some solemn drama unfolding itself amid the reverential, attentive silence of an assembly, eager to miss no least word or detail. The fleckless white veil of plighted troth gave place to the more somber drapery of the spouse, symbol of a world rejected. At the moment of Holy Communion, kneeling

before the celebrant who held in his hands the Blessed Sacrament, each of the newly-elect pronounced in unhesitating tones the formula of her vows. Then the Host that had witnessed this consecration, ratified the contract by entering into the heart of the pledged recipient as into a living sanctuary. After Mass, the Sisters were presented with a crucifix to be worn with the habit, and the Book of Constitutions. The chant of thanksgiving, *Te Deum laudamus*, then arose in joyful cadence as if seeking to reach the throne of the Almighty, Himself. Afterwards, the faithful withdrew, and, on the way homeward, talked of little except of these moving ceremonies and the future prospects of the new foundation.

At Vesper time, His Lordship, in company with the parish priest and Rev, Fr. Guigues, O. M. I., proceeded to the convent chapel. The Rt. Rev. Bishop summoned before him the three newly-professed sisters, and of his own authority appointed Sister Mary Rose, First Superior, Bursar and Novice-mistress ; Sister Mary Madeleine, Assistant and Directress of the Boarding School ; Sister Mary Agnes, Mistress of Needlework and other house-

hold crafts taught to the students. Then, having admitted the novices and postulants who in another apartment awaited his call, he presented to them the new dignitaries, whose authority they were henceforth to recognize without demur. Sister Mary Rose, at this unexpected turn of affairs, could not restrain her grief, while the Sisters unanimously gave themselves up to rejoicing over the opportune selection. The pupils next entered the chapel, and His Lordship acquainted them with the new order of things. Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament fittingly terminated the happenings of this never-to-be forgotten day. The important events that marked the eighth of December 1844, henceforward will be commemorated annually, as long as the Congregation subsists. On the morrow, the Bishop who continually manifested the interest of a real father towards this little flock, visited the convent once again, to strengthen the new Mothers by counsel that would enable them to carry the burden which, he knew, would bear heavily on their unaccustomed shoulders. Indeed, on this day of appointments, comforting words from the chief pastor found a ready acceptance among these inex-

perienced officials. He also gave a private hearing to each member of the tiny Sisterhood, and left them with this forcible word : « In unity will be your strength. Let union of spirit be the soul of your little community ; above all things, practise with increasing perfection the beautiful virtue of charity ».

During the visitation, at His Lordship's demand, his secretary opened the first register of the Congregation by entering the Brief of canonical erection, the Act of profession on the part of the Foundresses, and the record of their election. These constitute, in a way, the Religious Charter of the Institute. Some months later, on March 17, 1845, the Government gave legal existence and civic personality to the Congregation. The request for incorporation had been submitted to the Legislature by Mr. Louis Lacoste, County Representative, a devoted friend of the Congregation of the Holy Names.

II

THE Institute now found its permanent existence secured through a canonical establishment and a recognized legal status. By pushing out roots into the soil of Church and State, it partook of their stability. It possessed moreover as first Superior, a Mother well-prepared to guide its advance along the way to be indicated by Divine Providence.

Mother Mary Rose, the Book of Constitutions in hand, and still better the spirit of the Constitutions dwelling within her soul, considered, as we have seen, that far from being a place of honor, her position was one of peculiar responsibility. If she did not shrink from the charge in alarm, it was because when accepting the duties of Superior from her Bishop, she had recognized in his decision, the will of God made manifest. With unhesitating trust, she felt that divine grace would never fail

when she needed its special assistance. Fully did she realize the obligation imposed upon her by the Holy Rule. On the other hand, the Sisters expected nothing more than that she would continue, as in the past, to be their model and chief reliance. It was soon apparent, however, that a closer dependence on the Holy Spirit had increased within her heart that abundant flow of kindness, tender consideration and sympathy, which so often, heretofore, she had poured out unsparingly upon all those who entered within the sphere of her ministrations. More than ever, did she become a true mother to her spiritual daughters. To ensure constancy in their movement towards the perfection of their state, she took the lead, and kept their feet from faltering along the narrow way of strict observance, while, with firm and gentle touch, she helped them opportunely to avoid obstacles or to recover a false step.

Though watchful over her own growth in holiness and tireless in her solicitude for that of the Sisters, Mother Mary Rose did not neglect the children for whose benefit she had undertaken the onerous task of founding a community. We

have already marked her foresight with regard to school-matters ; talks on pedagogy, study in actual contact with classes at the Brothers' school, constant reference to the high standard set by the Oblate Fathers, — these were but indications of what she intended to attempt with the help of time and better facilities. Her ideal was to impart a thorough, practical, eminently Christian education. Her firm good sense, aiming straight at the mark, sought to apply in the school room the clear simple processes of the Brothers. As for education properly so called, she favored the principles laid down by Madame de Maintenon, whom she looked upon as a reliable authority in the training of young girls for the home and for society. The ideas prevalent in the « great century », — broad in scope and abundant in telling results, — she sought to popularize among the pupils habitually dwelling in the convent. Thus it became the ambition of the Sisters of Longueuil to revive, in the boarding-schools they directed, the order of the day once followed by the young scholars at St. Cyr, to re-establish customs, plays and occupations that, filling every hour, would leave no moment

profitless. Unceasingly were inculcated a love for piety, attentiveness to the work in hand, respect, moderation, deference, punctuality, a constant cheerfulness, a sane and judicious valuation of ordinary happenings. By insensible degrees the pupils were led to examine their conclusions, and refer them to fixed principles ; more especially did they acquire the habit of reflecting, and of seeking even in their least important doings what is best worth while. They were also encouraged to exercise their skill in the gracious industries useful to woman, whatever her position in life. Household arts received due attention, past experience having prepared the Superior to impart practically the knowledge indispensable to a home maker. Here again, swayed by the counsels of Madame de Maintenon, she promoted an interest in plain sewing and knitting, rather than embroidery or fancy needle work. Indeed the women of that period in Canada, even those moving in higher circles, willingly cultivated the useful rather than the merely ornamental.

Differing from the school of Port-Royal, St. Cyr held to the tenet, « Education must be made attractive, and instruction must be diversified by timely

amusements. So was it understood by Mother Mary Rose and her willing co-laborers, who spared no pains to second her desires, and to surround the pupils with an atmosphere of untroubled content. Tangible rewards, credit notes read before the Sisters assembled, testimonials that could be sent to parents or guardians, all were employed to cultivate a noble spirit of emulation, and, in addition to the recreations which, as a rule, were merry and full of movement, a well-earned holiday at timely intervals, an improvised dramatic entertainment, a classic play reproduced in costume, helped to vary the monotony of daily discipline.

On two occasions, during the first year of teaching, the Superior invited friends of the Institution to be present at the oral examinations, — the chief test of proficiency then in vogue. LES MÉLANGES RELIGIEUX, then the standard Catholic weekly for Montreal, gave in each of these circumstances, a favorable account of the proceedings. When reporting the first examination, after recalling the origin of the school, its aim and its growing progress, the reviewer continues: — « We must acknowledge that the headway made in educa-

tional excellence by this community, surpasses expectation. It is, indeed, astonishing that a house counting as yet but one year's existence, should be able to register in actual attendance upwards of fifty boarding-students and quite as many day pupils, who come to benefit by an instruction that we may safely call above the average. Besides the usual subjects of study in French and English, music, painting, fancy needlework, and even household science, receive a commendable attention, as witnessed by the exhibits on view. We may also assume that heart, as well as mind, is effectively trained, since the teaching of religion presides over this course of study as its usual and necessary concomitant. »

Bishop Bourget, while expressing, at the close of the Exercises, his personal satisfaction, did not fail to refer the gratifying outcome to God, and to enjoin a fervent thanksgiving.

During the summer of this year, the first two novices, who were at the same time the two chief teachers and devoted aids in all departments,—Sister Teresa of Jesus and Sister Veronica of the Crucifix,—made their religious profession, on the feast of

Our Lady's Assumption. When the ceremonies were ended, seven young girls came forward to solicit admission into the novitiate. These were seven pupils whose holy ambition led them to follow in the footsteps of their teachers. « They are the first fruits of vocation among our scholars, » remarks the exultant record in the Annals : — « It is the confirmation of the Gospel saying : — ' *And every one that hath left father or mother ... or lands for My Name's sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall possess life everlasting*' ». The foundresses had truly forsaken all things, they had thrown themselves into the unknown, their only riches, trust in God ; — and even now, the hundred fold was pouring in plentifully. Canonical erection, recognition by the Commonwealth, auxiliary sisters already ten in number, happy in their allotted functions and glad to dwell in the house of the Lord, and on that memorable day in August :- « a coronal of seven choir-postulants placed upon the brow of this youthful Institute by the hand of our Blessed Mother. Is it not a visible proof of God's blessing, a promise of similar crowns for every passing year ? »

III

THESE early days were the heroic age of the Institute, partly by reason of the insufficient funds at the disposal of the Sisters, partly by the debts contracted for equipment. A call for this kind of heroism persisted with little interruption, and along the strait way, several were destined to drop out of line forever, before the path widened out, or lost its asperities. First, the house was too small. The number of boarding-students multiplying, the Sisters saw themselves forced to relinquish, in their favor, both refectory and dormitory, — with beds, bedding, tables, chairs, and tableware. At night, when the pupils slept, Sisters were to be seen emerging from this or that secluded haven with mattress and coverings, to arrange them as best they might, upon the floor, or on some promising support, and to dispose their weary

limbs upon a couch, that often left them only more uncomfortably aware of their fatigue. In the morning, the pupils reappeared, but nothing of the previous night's make-shifts remained in sight.

Meals were taken, in a narrow passage ; a table, improvised from two boards was upheld by empty barrels, chairs would have been superfluous, the little hall not being wide enough to accommodate chairs and tables at the same time. Every one ate standing except the Superior who, owing to the express injunction of Father Allard, occupied a seat at one end of the tiny apartment. The fare comprised only what was strictly necessary, sometimes not even that. One day after the Benedicite, the distressed Mother was obliged to declare to her waiting Sisters : « My sisters, to-day, I have no bread to give you ». In general, during this period of stress and strain, bread was a luxury, Sisters sometimes succeeded in making one slice last a whole week. Potatoes were eaten instead, or stewed pumpkin. This regrettable state of affairs will not appear strange if we remember that, during the early half of the nineteenth century, the agricultural people of Quebec were

rich in everything except money. Transportation facilities being few, commerce was restricted; much of the ordinary traffic was effected by barter. Several patrons of the convent paid their dues in produce. The year under consideration provided a poor harvest of wheat. Flour was scarce, its price high, hence the temporary lack of bread among the Sisters who, while depriving themselves, did not allow their young charges to suffer inconvenience. Yet, in spite of privations, perhaps because of them, joy reigned in every soul and beamed on every countenance; it was considered a privilege to undergo the effects of poverty. The Annalist recounts cheerfully: « We are glad to eat our meals, standing. It reminds us of the Hebrews taking their symbolic repast before setting out for the Promised Land. We resign ourselves to meagre fare and respond contentedly to the blessing over potatoes, when there is no bread. »

Satan, when reviling St. Bernard, called him scornfully « a chewer of cabbages and turnips », no doubt he longed for leave to rail at these brave and uncomplaining Sisters. The Rector of Belœil, however, on being informed of the straits to which

they were reduced, came generously to their relief. A tenderhearted brother, he could not brook the thought of his cherished Eulalie subject to such privations. Deeply afflicted that she had not appealed to him earlier, he begged that never again would she allow herself or her Sisters to confront actual need while he was at hand to better their circumstances.

Somewhat later, their wants were abundantly supplied from the source whence aid should flow. The church wardens of Longueuil had asked the Sisters to purchase, outright, the piece of land and the house presently serving as convent and school. The terms of sale not being acceptable to Mother Mary Rose, no decision was reached at the time, but so favorable was the impression produced by the work of the community, that the trustees, agreeing to the proposals of Father Brassard, P. P., resolved to donate the property to the Sisters for educational purposes, solely. This happy issue from their chief difficulty, the Sisterhood attributed to the favor of the Blessed Virgin. This welcome decision, announced at the beginning of May, seemed like the answer to their

repeated supplications. They wrote in the Annals : « Let us thank Mary, our Blessed Patron ! Owing to the liberality of the church-wardens, we are now firmly fixed on the soil from which our young Institute arose. Henceforward, a bond of grateful remembrance will bind us to this parish which, by bestowing upon us a gift so desirable, has deserved to rank among our signal benefactors. »

As the inconvenience that continued to exist, arose from lack of house-room, the Council of the Community decided to build a wing on the left side of the main building. Work was begun at once. The plan provided for a chapel as an integral part of this addition. Bishop Bourget, assisted by Rev. Fr. Guigues, Ecclesiastical Superior of the Community, and Rev. Fr. Allard, laid the corner-stone of the new structure with the usual ceremonies, on the twenty-eighth of May 1846.

The scholastic year 1845-1846 witnessed, in the boarding-school, the organization of a Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary. When remembering the benefits wrought by her old sodality in Belœil, Mother Mary Rose concluded that the same cause would produce similar beneficial effects. Children

of Mary, chosen among the most exemplary pupils, would always form a select body, under whose leadership all the other scholars would move on towards the best they could compass in deed and aspiration. Rev. Fr. Guigues had obtained for the the little confraternity a canonical erection on the eighth of November 1845, and for the three quarters of a century since that date, in every convent of the Holy Names, a branch of this Sodality rallies, under the standard of Mary Immaculate, a choice portion of the students, — those who prove recommendable by adherence to principle, piety and excellent behavior in school. Afterwards they leaven society by deserving to rank among truly estimable Christian women. No appellation is more coveted among the pupils of the Holy Names than the title, « Child of Mary ».

The Annals of 1846 mention, also, a visit made by Dr. J. B. Meilleur, the newly-appointed Superintendent of Public Instruction for Quebec. He examined the classes orally, noted the action of teachers, and commended both in his written report.

Meanwhile, despite the insufficiency of all things that could prove attractive to nature, new recruits

came to swell the ranks in the novitiate. Record is duly made of vestings and professions. The importance of these occasions was usually enhanced by the presence of the venerable Bishop, always on the alert to promote the welfare of the budding religious Congregation. His visits were a joy to all the household, because of his fatherly interest in the concerns of even its humblest members.

Several lay Sisters had, by this time, become professed nuns; the earliest to enlist were Miss Eléonore Provost, Sister Marie Anastasie, a former sodalist of Belœil, glad to cast in her lot with her revered Directress; and Miss Marie Fortier, Sister Marie Félicienne. Strong, willing, already moulded to a prayerful and self-denying life, it needed no great effort on their part to cultivate a deep attachment for their holy calling; they easily became an example to later arrivals. The auxiliary Sisters were accepted by the Foundress to share in the domestic cares that might too inconveniently interrupt, among the choir Sisters, the work of teaching, choral recitation of the office, or the administration of temporalities. Both categories, however, constitute but one family, whose members

are bound in like degree by the same religious vows. These willing aids have not seldom proved themselves the surest source of reliance in moments of unlooked for emergency. Without their cooperation in the practical management of household affairs, the community would not have been able to mould itself in its present symmetrical form. How comforting to realize, at all times, that these auxiliary Sisters, by labor and prayer such as marked the hidden life of Nazareth, provide a quiet force of supplication that draws down upon the more apparent activities of the Congregation, the manifest blessings of Heaven! From the beginning, Mother Mary Rose set a due value on their efforts, taking equal pains in training both divisions to the religious life, irrespective of the part taken by either in contributing to the end the Institute has in view.

To the Sisters in general, she often recalled this fundamental principle, that only by bearing the cross with patience, do we reach the vision of God. « Opportunities abound for the practice of self-denial », she insisted, « these are pearls offered you by God to embellish your crown. Do not let

them slip through your fingers ». To every one she gave a right example, being the first to undertake whatever work might be on hand ; first to reach the chapel, first in the observance of silence, first in practising union with God ; first in cheerful acceptance of privation, and first to grasp the occasions for doing penance. A tranquil joy overflowed from her heart into the hearts of her spiritual daughters, inspiring them with new ardor in the service of Jesus and Mary.

Of the seven postulants who had been admitted in August 1845, the eldest was Miss Flavie Sainte-Marie. Always inclined to piety, and generous in the gift of herself, she soon attained to a perfection that presaged an early fitness for her reward. Humble and penitential practices possessed for her a special attraction. On assuming the white veil, the patron assigned to her, St. Andrew the Apostle, was, she learned, an ardent lover of the cross. It became her desire to imitate his joy in suffering. Hardly had her canonical year begun, when an exhausting debility undermining her strength, reduced her in a few weeks to a pitiful state of weakness, clearly the forerunner of death.

The Bishop abridged her noviceship and received her profession of vows.

How sincere her happiness, and how secure its foundation ! Already the spouse of Jesus while on earth, she enjoyed the certainty that after a few days more, she would find a place among the virgins who always follow the Lamb. At evening, the third of July 1846, she faded quietly out of life, — the first perfect flower offered to Jesus and Mary, by the Congregation.

The June examinations of 1846 obtained from the MÉLANGES another enthusiastic report of progress well sustained. Every detail likely to interest, found mention. The school work, the music, the deportment of the pupils, their white costume with its sky blue silken scarf draped across the shoulder, the specimens of needlework, and the exhibit of domestic science, – all were commended. Attention was drawn even to a tempting cheese, which « had made people feel hungry. » The programme finished, Bishop Bourget addressed, in his inimitable fashion, first the students, then the worthy pastor of Longueuil who had assured the establishment of the Sisters. Next, he praised the

parishioners for their generous cooperation in setting the ownership of the convent property beyond question, thus contributing efficiently to the permanence of the school. Finally, he congratulated the relatives of pupils, since patronage offered the surest proof of confidence in the work of the Sisters. The Sisters, meanwhile, had quietly entered upon the exercises of their annual retreat, which closed on the fifteenth of August with a religious reception. Six postulants assumed the habit; the co-foundresses, Mothers Marie Rose, Marie Madeleine and Marie Agnes, with Sisters Teresa of Jesus and Veronica of the Crucifix, pronounced their perpetual vows. A gold ring to be worn on the third finger of the right hand, symbolized this lasting alliance. As had been done at the first profession, each candidate read aloud, in presence of the Sacred Host held in the hands of the celebrant, the engagement that bound her irrevocably to the Divine Spouse. After Mass, the officiating prelate, Right Rev. John-Charles Prince, coadjutor Bishop of Montreal, blessed the rings, saying to each candidate as he slipped the emblematic circlet into place: « I unite thee to Jesus Christ, Son of the Most High,

who will be thy defender against every assailant. Accept the ring of thy engagement, the seal of the Holy Spirit. Thou art the Spouse of God Himself ; if thou serve Him faithfully, thou wilt be crowned for ever. »

Then their voices rose in the exultant cry of St. Agnes : « I am joined to Him whom the Angels adore, whose beauty the sun and the moon extol ». At last, the Congregation being represented in the four degrees of the religious consecration, its establishment was complete.

Mother Mary Rose now found herself able to fulfil a promise made in 1843 to the Parish of Belœil, when its people petitioned to have her remain among them. « Build a convent » she had said ; « as soon as we are in condition to accede to your demand, we shall come ». The trustees acting on this engagement, had erected a modest structure of unhewn stone, two storeys in height, and the coming of the Sisters was awaited with a certain impatience. Sister Teresa of Jesus, Sister Marie Ursule and Sister Marie Anne having been selected to begin the foundation, they set out for their new abode on the third of November 1846. Mother

Mary Rose after confiding the outgoing missioners to the Blessed Virgin, gave them wise counsel and led them to the carriage that stood ready to bear them away. They were not leaving for a distant country, it is true, but their departure marking the first break in the original group, was keenly felt. Father Brassard, Rector of Longueuil, with Fathers Guigues and Allard, O. M. I., through deference for what this journey signified, accompanied the conveyance of the Sisters to Belœil.

Rev. Father Durocher, after a cordial welcome, presented the new-comers with one hundred pounds sterling, — a munificent gift for the time, — to tide them over the first inevitable outlay. But the young Superior, Sister Teresa of Jesus, soon proved her tact and skill in the direction of the household, as well as in financial matters and the necessary dealings with outsiders. The mission at Belœil had fallen into competent hands.

IV

THE work of the missions soon made additional demands on the zeal of Mother Mary Rose, who had experienced great satisfaction when directing her first swarm to Belœil. It seemed the fulfilment of hopes she had conceived and entertained while dwelling in that parish. Two years later, in September 1848, we shall see her sending a little group to St. Timothy with Mother Marie Madeleine as Superior ; another, to St. Lin under the direction of Sister Marie Ursule.

Third among the choir Sisters so far professed, Sister Marie Ursule, before entering the Community was a Miss Aglaé Vandandaigue-Gadbois. The honorable record of her family is to have given seven daughters to the service of religion. Five of these ladies devoted life and talent as Sisters of Providence ; the sixth, joined the Grey Nuns. Their

father before dying, bequeathed his vast acreage, his solidly constructed farmhouse and its belongings, to the Congregation that had attracted the greatest number of his children. These grounds, with the handsome, roomy dwelling, have been turned into a Sanatorium, which, as « L'Asile St. Victor », perpetuates the Christian name of the generous donor, and keeps alive the memory of a household group in every way a credit to their family traditions, and to the fair Catholic land they claim as their own.

The responsibilities of Mother Mary Rose multiplied in the ratio of her foundations. From afar she watched over the Sisters, always on the alert to come to their aid by admonition, counsel, or encouragement. In consequence, her correspondence that gave her no little solicitude, has preserved to the Congregation a priceless treasure of her sayings, applicable to-day as when they rose fresh from her motherly heart. To one, she writes: « I recommend you to insist upon the catechism. The parents of our children expect it, and their wishes agree too well with our own, not to be favored by every means at our disposal..... I wish you, each and all, continued health and abounding

joy in the Lord ». To another, who is in distress from having still to strive against the action of her natural tendencies : « Be brave, dear Sister, you have not yet reached the goal. Let us labor steadily to overcome self in this life ; we shall have a long rest in Eternity ». Another found herself a lonely exile on the banks of the Richelieu; « Though absent, dear Sister, your place is kept among us. I wish you the spirit of sacrifice ; that is what will keep you happy wherever you may go through obedience, it is the spirit to be sought by the lowly daughters of Jesus and Mary ».

And again : « Ask your little children to pray for our needs and for peace in the Church. Cultivate within their young hearts the attractive purity and modesty which should enrich the heritage of every Christian maiden ». Again, « You have grasped the Cross of your Divine Lord with a firm hand ; do not let it trail, but shoulder it bravely. In every thing that befalls you, try to see the will of our Heavenly Father. »

A similar gentle, firm, encouraging advice forms the warp and woof of all her letters ; involuntarily she revealed to others what she had always been

herself, an earnest lover of her Divine Master.

The year 1847 is sadly memorable in Canada by reason of distressing events that followed the arrival of shiploads of destitute emigrants, driven from Ireland by famine, and conveyed across the ocean in over-crowded, unsanitary boats. When they reached the Canadian ports, these people, stricken with ship-fever, died by hundreds, several without leaving means for their identification. The horror seems still recent, so profoundly did it impress the compassionate Catholic people of Quebec, among whom, at the time, want was comparatively unknown, and who were one in faith with these pitiable victims thrown friendless on their shores.

A sad chapter in the story recounts the heroic death of several priests and nuns from the diocese of Montreal, who, contracting the dread disease from those they sought to save, fell upon the field of duty. Bishop Bourget having gone, like another Charles Borromeo, to aid these afflicted exiles, did not escape the contagion and had to be taken to the Hospital. His constitution resisting the attack, he was providentially spared for the welfare of his growing diocese.

Mother Mary Rose did not hesitate to accept a share in the work of permanent aid afterwards inaugurated by the Bishop, by way of providing for the orphaned children of the emigrants. He appealed to his people and to the religious houses to adopt, according to their means, one or more of these desolate waifs. The Sisters of the Holy Names took in three little girls, by the name of Mullen. When care and kindness had bettered their pitiable condition, they were admitted among the pupils, and henceforth were looked upon as wards of the religious family. Two of them, after growing up, joined the Sisterhood which had fostered their early years. Owing to the lack of proper nourishment during infancy, and the after-exposure to hardships far beyond the capacity of childhood to endure, their health never became normal. They soon sank under the burden of life, not sorry to exchange it for the better existence their faith had taught them to expect.

On the Feast of the Holy Cross, 1847. the new Convent Chapel was dedicated in the morning, its main altar consecrated, and the chapel-bell blessed. Though the festival itself died away

with set of sun, the joy of possessing a fit place of abode for our dear Lord remained to light up many days yet to dawn. Other sources of gratification were opening also. An advance in material prosperity inspired the good Mother Foundress with the hope of an assured future for her work, and a certainty of being able to cancel the debts that presently weighed upon the Institute. The land-holdings had already been increased; the house, more roomy and convenient by reason of its new wing, attracted pupils in greater numbers; the novitiate rejoiced both in the quality and the fervor of its inmates.

« Our congregation suffers nothing, its works are blessed with success », once wrote St. Vincent de Paul: « this unruffled calm disquiets me because God's way is to harry those who serve Him, and to chastise whom He loves ». Our Heavenly Father was preparing for His faithful servant, Mother Mary Rose, a proof of this solicitous love, and once again did adverse winds blow from the quarter least apprehended.

Between the Oblates, missionary priests from France, members of a religious order, having their

chief Canadian monastery in Longueuil, and the Rector, Rev. Moise Brassard, arose, about this time, a divergence of opinion concerning the convent. This divergence provoked discussions that grew acute, whenever it became indispensable to define the relations of either party with the Sisterhood. Father Brassard, without whose invitation and generous proffer of a school, the Sisters could have had no valid reason to settle in Longueuil, he, who had supplied them with a house and a piece of land free of charge, who had their success at heart as part of his own parochial achievements, felt aggrieved that the spiritual, as well as the temporal direction of the Community, had not fallen to his share. It is probable that of his own initiative, he would never have raised the question. But recurrent trifles fomented his dissatisfaction, till becoming apparent, it occasioned keen suffering to the Mother Foundress who found herself, so to say, between « the upper and the nether millstone ». The actors in this little drama, having left its scene forever, no hesitation need be felt in speaking of an accidental disagreement which might easily have entailed serious consequences upon the moral

Convent of the Holy Names, Longueuil
(at death of Foundress)

well-being of the Institute, almost at its inception. The details when scrutinized bring clearly into relief the sense of right and justice that animated all who were concerned. However regrettable, the conflict of opinion provoked no action through unworthy motives. Could it indeed be otherwise? The Oblate Fathers, learned, courteous and devout, belonged to the finest period of the post-revolutionary religious revival in France. Rev. Fr. Brassard was a devoted priest, truly sacerdotal in soul and training; both parties displayed a lively interest in the welfare of the rising Congregation. Bishop Bourget had ruled from the outset that the Fathers should direct the Community in spiritual matters, and that Rev. Father Brassard would be its business adviser. It would seem to have been easy for either party to confine its action within the prescribed limits. No blame can be attributed to the kindly-disposed Rector. Yet, from the day when it was pointed out to him that perhaps the convent was directed in a spirit alien to his own, he began to fear a divided allegiance. Doubtless he would not be held responsible, since everything had been foreseen and determined by

the diocesan authority. But those who can enter into the soul of a true pastor, those especially, who remember the patriarchal influence wielded over his flock by a Canadian parish priest of the period under consideration, will understand Father Brassard's distress of mind when he saw himself, apparently, shut out from the exercise of a directive control over the internal workings of the new Congregation. No further need we insist. It is clear that under conditions, the relations then existing were grievously strained. Causes of annoyance multiplied almost imperceptibly. The situation gradually became a subject of comment throughout the parish. Certain persons, not averse to widening the breach, spread abroad reports unfavorable to the convent; reports sufficiently calumnious to call for an open refutation.

Amid the vicissitudes of this regrettable time, we see the religious growth of Mother Mary Rose reach its culminating point. Never did her humility, her patience, her forbearance, shine out with more convincing luster. Her bearing all through the difficulties was beyond criticism; a more tactful course of action than she adopted, can scarcely be

imagined. Her filial, even reverential deference towards the Rector manifested itself at every turn, while her firmness in adhering to the course of action laid down for her guidance by the Right Reverend Bishop, never faltered. Material interests she referred to the Reverend Rector; all other concerns, to the Fathers. She easily persuaded herself, however, that some other Sister in her position, would have a surer prospect of reaching a successful issue; hence, after weighing the matter before God in prayer, she tendered to Bishop Bourget her resignation as Superior. The saintly Prelate observed, in reply, that the moment of difficulty was not the time for surrender. Mother Mary Rose silently submitted. « Had I expected to enjoy honor and repose in the religious life, » she wrote to Sister Teresa, « I should certainly find myself disabused. »

At last came the rift in the clouds. At the height of the misunderstanding, Rev. Fr. Guigues, Superior of the Oblates, having been preconized Bishop of Bytown, – the Ottawa of to-day –, the Community of the Holy Names found itself bereft of its ecclesiastical Superior. His departure occasioned other

changes among the Oblates, thus solving the chief problem under discussion. Bishop Bourget wrote to the Reverend Mother : « I am convinced that it would not be wise in you, now, to shrink from the trials sent by Divine Providence. Like many still to be met, they will teach you a more perfect reliance on Christ and His Blessed Mother ... May Jesus and Mary protect your Sisters and grant you prudence. It is a virtue absolutely necessary to a leader. Ask that blessing for me, since my need is even greater than yours. »

Rev. Th. Durocher, also, rallied to the aid of his sister. Among the benefactors of the Congregation, he holds a prominent place. During life, he helped Mother Mary Rose by timely counsel and by material gifts. After his lamented death, it was found that he had drawn up his will in favor of the Sisters of the Holy Names, who cherish the memory both of the legacy and of the saintly donor.

Time deftly adjusts all things. Some few months after the events just noted, the Oblate Fathers, finding that a residence in the city would more conveniently favor their missionary movements,

transferred their headquarters to Montreal. Their withdrawal permanently severed their official relations with the Community. Nor did the worthy Father Brassard lose interest in the Congregation he had fostered with a well-intentioned zeal. Events may be anticipated far enough to mention that after his incumbency at Longueuil had ended, in 1855, he found himself in charge of the parish of St.Roch de l'Achigan, Que., where, later on, he was enabled to open a convent school. He would entrust its direction to none but the Sisters of the Holy Names, who found in him to his latest days, a father interested in their well-being and constantly solicitous for their advancement.

Thrift and industry, meanwhile, allowed the Community to assure its claims to the title deed of the small estate. The Council, having decided to reimburse the original donors, had the holdings valued by experts, and agreed to remit the price by annual instalments, with interest on the estimated sum.

This little tempest, so severe while it lasted, served only to test the strength of the Congregation, which deservedly rejoiced to find itself able to

withstand a shock that might have shattered the edifice, had not its foundations been so securely laid.

But what of its effect on Mother Mary Rose? Here, indeed, the results were deplorable and beyond reckoning. The uncertainty, the mental distress, had made deep inroads on a constitution never entirely robust. A disease, repelled from early years in its advance, but destined to triumph in the end, had renewed its insidious attacks and robbed her of the physical vigor more than ever necessary to the exercise of her manifold duties. Yet she battled incessantly to hide a while longer from her Sisters what, till now, they had scarcely been allowed to perceive.

Despite these vicissitudes, the novitiate increased. Mother Mary Rose had reason to congratulate herself when accepting the able helpers sent by Providence, as so many pledges that her work would steadily prolong its usefulness. These youthful recruits, chosen souls, diverse in gifts and qualifications, proved to be eminently adapted for the upbuilding of a permanent religious edifice, a fit abiding-place for many forms of usefulness helpful to Mother Church.

An interesting gallery could be hung with the portraits of the first Sisters of the Institute; the choice must be limited to those who, under the eye of the Mother Foundress, or immediately after her death, took an active part in its development and expansion. Already have we become acquainted with the earliest associates. Mother Mary Agnes, « stern as the granite rock, tender as the violet at its base », retained the sternness mostly for herself, the tenderness for her Lord, or for those around her. The obedient and devoted Mother Madeleine who, in the beginning, had provided the school, the scholars, the material for housekeeping, and the revenue that kept the enterprise alive, remained ever contentedly in the background, seeking to exert neither influence nor authority except as directed by her appointed Superiors. To her latest years she loved to teach the catechism, and the Gospel, by means of which, even with failing powers, she sought to awake in little children a personal love for Our Lord, by a clear understanding of our Holy Faith. Her preferred pupils were the needy, or the less-favored, on whom she poured out the affection of a mother, showing them how to

lean on God, how to make the best of their slender endowments and, after their schooldays, never losing interest in their concerns. Her compensation was the love they unfailingly gave in return.

We have also remarked in passing, the zealous, aspiring, progressive, Sister Teresa of Jesus, and the prayerful, ever enthusiastic student, Sister Veronica of the Crucifix. The former, endowed with the spirit of an apostle, became pre-eminently a woman of action; the latter retained through life a childlike soul that could seldom suspect, much less discover, anything except good in those around her. Every one sought her, convinced that if other welcome were doubtful, hers would be unquestioning and generous as befitted her great affectionate heart. All through her latest months on earth, Mother Mary Rose leaned trustfully on Sister Veronica who, by unanimous choice, became her immediate successor. It is perhaps her greatest eulogy that Mother Mary Rose, when dying, charged her to complete the religious code of the Congregation by the compilation of the Book of Customs.

Under the administration of Sister Teresa of Jesus,

who transferred the Mother-house to Montreal, the community first tried its wings and poised itself for flight to places far distant from the home-nest, reaching even the far-off coast of the Pacific, and carrying to regions then little known, a love for the work of Mother Mary Rose.

The fourth Superior General, had also some slight contact with the Foundress, enough at least to have imbibed the beautiful spirit of self-devotion, that characterized our early Sisters. Small, slender, seemingly frail in constitution, gentle and retiring, but quick and firm in decision, Sister Marie Stanislas, at a critical moment in its existence became the keystone of the Institute. After efficiently filling every other office of trust, she governed the Congregation wisely and well during two terms, remained for several years further, a member of the General Council, and to the end of life, a judicious adviser. Sister Marie Stanislas celebrated her sixtieth anniversary of profession, lived to be eighty-three, and fell asleep in the Lord, August 23, 1912, surrounded by the loving veneration of the numerous Sisterhood she had seen evolved from the tiny group assembled

near the Foundress when she solicited a place in the ranks.

A number of other names clamor for recognition. Here, we find a daughter of the Seigneur Hertel de Rouville, of St. Hilaire. Impossible to picture his dismay when Miss Hermine, asking to quit her luxurious home, avowed her determination to join the poverty-loving circle who labored in Longueuil for the welfare of souls. Allowed, after many rebuffs, to enter by way of trial, she embraced the arduous unaccustomed life with such simple naturalness and ease, that few could suspect on her part either sacrifice or regret. As Sister Mary Scholastica, she became in after years a resourceful Bursar General, superintended the erection of a Mother-house at Hochelaga, laid out its grounds, embosomed it in a grove of living verdure, and imprinted upon the education imparted within its walls, the seal of her own lively faith, her distinctive courtesy and grace of manner.

When at the age of seventeen, Miss Elizabeth Daigneault was entered as a boarder in Longueuil, Mother Mary Rose at once divined that the new

pupil would become a prized addition to the Sisterhood. Before she took the veil, the question of her religious name arose; the Foundress said: « Let us give her the name of an angel, she already has an angel's virtue ». She was called Sister Marie Angèle. In the course of years she will be Secretary General, Directress of Studies, and Novice Mistress. During her last painful illness, Bishop Bourget will say: « I pray God to spare you a subject of such worth ». But her reward being ready even then, she went to enjoy it without further delay.

The industrious auxiliary Sisters accepted by Mother Mary Rose, brought joy to her heart. Sister Marie Françoise early calls for notice. Ever smiling, ever ready to help, robust, seldom weary, attentive to her work and given to ejaculatory prayer, — wishing for nothing here below except to please God and to gratify « *Notre Mère Fondatrice* », — she completed her life of labor for Christ by continually aspiring towards the delight of His presence. Her prayer goes on Above, while her chosen place must be quite close to her revered Mother Mary Rose. Among these first auxiliaries,

we find Sister Mary Philomène, (Margaret Reed), a soul that throve in the atmosphere of obedience as a bird in its native air. Every one saw in her, the incarnation of a lovable candor and a celestial grace. After her death, several persons affirmed that they had sometimes come to ring the parlor bell, for the sole purpose of looking awhile upon the serene angelic face of this humble portress.

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MOTHER Mary Rose began the month of May 1849, with even more than customary fervor. Among her spiritual notes we remark an Act of Consecration to the Blessed Virgin, composed for her own private devotion, all its words permeated with the fragrance of a profound self-abasement before God, and a filial, loving trust in His Blessed Mother. She suggested that each of the Sisters should strive by assiduous effort, to acquire some special virtue of the Virgin Mary, during the month, and to engage in its daily practice. When the closing day drew near, she confided once more to paper the sentiments that filled her heart, begging her Queen to protect all the Sisters of the little Congregation, « but most of all her unworthy Sister Mary Rose ». — Again and again she recommended her religious house-

hold to Mary, conjuring her to enkindle within it the sacred fire of her own love for Jesus. Then was made plain her underlying purpose, — « Look with favor on the petition of thy poor afflicted one. *Watch over my dying hour.* I believe in all that the Holy Catholic Church believes and teaches. I believe in thy Immaculate Conception. I believe in God, I love Him with my whole heart, and after Him I love Thee, my tender Mother ». She signed : « Thy most unworthy servant, Sister Mary Rose ».

Intimately convinced that her course here below was ending, the Foundress now sought to banish the cares and anxieties that might hinder the union of her soul with Christ. Having entrusted her dearest project to the hands of God, she felt that she could indeed depart ; her task was done. The edifice of which Bishop Bourget had declared her to be the cornerstone, was essentially complete. Her community, trained to fervor, unity of action, and regular observance, had received the consecration of trial ; its devoted membership offered the most hopeful assurance that the good work would be effectively carried on. The fire of a future

apostleship, already kindled in three promising extensions of the Congregation, imparted its ardor to a number of young girls whose expanding minds were illumined with a knowledge and a love of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary. And as if to counterbalance these gratifying convictions, sorrows of the soul, the hours of mental anguish known only to the Saints, had impressed a final completeness upon the Mother's interior life. Weary of earthly things, she could say with the Apostle : « I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ ». She seemed, indeed, ripe for Heaven ; it was visible to all who approached her. « Our Reverend Mother is a saint », declared the pupils. The younger ones asked, « Are the angels holier than Our Mother ? » « She is a saint », said her Sisters, best acquainted with her by every-day intercourse. Seculars, though they met her but casually , re-echoed the general sentiment : — « The Superior is a saint ! » A venerable Oblate lay-brother, who often accompanied Father Allard to the convent to serve at the altar, affirmed repeatedly, that he perceived a celestial light encircling the head of the Foundress. after she

received the Holy Communion. Both Sisters and scholars, moved with an indefinable impulse to consider her bearing during the divine offices, noticed that her face seemed all aflame with holy joy, — visibly illumined by a glow from within. They could not but watch her return from the Holy Table to her usual place. Nor could they tire of gazing, so evidently did she appear to be already favored with the clear vision of Heavenly mysteries.

Far different was the Mother's idea of herself. Perceiving only her own nothingness, and her poverty of soul, she wrote: — « Always am I a prey to incredible weakness in the conquest of self ». And so entire was her reserve, so habitual her reticence on such subjects, that a like respectful silence held her associates. No one could have presumed to imply a personal sense of her holiness, or to seek a confidence so strictly withheld. Secure in the knowledge of her own abjectness, she remained insensible to any outside word or look which might have sought to shake her conviction. In fact, any demonstration of the kind would pass unperceived, because of her being unconscious of

a reason for its display. Meanwhile, though fighting incessantly against a wasting constitutional malady, her cheerfulness did not abate; she discharged the numerous duties that claimed her attention, and responded promptly to every call, so that Sisters and pupils sought her assistance freely as ever, without realizing the nearness of her swiftly approaching end.

The last of May witnessed the final departure of all the Oblate Fathers, except Fathers Telmon and Allard who held residence till the middle of August. Sincere regret is expressed in the Annals as well as a grateful appreciation of the part borne by these Fathers in the launching of the Institute. « The names of Fathers Telmon, Guigues, Allard, Honorat, are indelibly inscribed upon our records. May our Blessed Mother Mary uphold our courage during these days of sorrow for their retirement. » But this withdrawal of her trusted spiritual counsellors, Mother Mary Rose felt to be a truly severe deprivation. The Oblates understood her so thoroughly ; they had seconded her efforts top romote the cause in which, unsparingly, she had spent energy and life. For years she had confided

to them the culture of her soul, and now, to all intents and purposes, they were disappearing beyond recall at the critical moment of her own setting out on the Great Journey.

Days of deeper grief were presently to dawn upon the devoted Community; an unflagging foe had almost achieved its conquest. Patient, resigned, gentle, Mother Mary Rose moved on towards the end, of which each sunset lessened the distance. « O my God », she would exclaim, « I cannot say like St. Teresa », ' let me suffer or let me die ', « but, let me suffer, dear Lord, and do Thy will, that is my one desire ! » During the week in which she first found herself unable to leave her room, a class of children made their First Holy Communion, and she asked to see the little communicants, who were brought to her side. Tenderly she spoke of their happiness, exhorting them to remain faithful to the sweet Saviour they had just received. Her glance lingered upon one of the group, Thais Lacoste, to whom she said : « As for you, my child, you will be one of ours, that is written in Heaven. You belong to us ». In the light of after-events the words seem prophetic. After schooldays had ended,

little Miss Lacoste became Sister Thais of St. Joseph, an eminent and influential religious of the Holy Names. Already it has been remarked that her father, Senator Lacoste, aided the Community to obtain its charter of incorporation.

No further meeting with the pupils took place, but while the taper of life still burned, the Foundress employed its fitful, flickering energy in favor of her dear Sisters. To Sister Teresa, the Bursar, she would say : « Have you the means to keep the Community going on comfortably? Have the Sisters everything they need? The well-being of their souls stirred a still deeper solicitude : she continued to insist upon a faithful practice of obedience, a love for charity in act and word, silence, fidelity in little things;– her heart concerned itself with the Community's spiritual interests to the very end. Love for God and her fellow-creatures now radiated from every act ; the interests of Holy Church, the welfare of the Sovereign Pontiff, the zealous works of the clergy, all found place in her sympathy. Always she had loved the poor, the sick, the sorrowful ; with inexpressible tenderness she loved her Congregation ; but above

and beyond every other attachment was her love for Jesus and Mary, whose Holy Names constituted her armor of strength and defense.

And what of her religious family during these distressful alternations of fear and hope? For a considerable time its members were lulled into security by the brightness of the Mother's aspect, and her success in concealing the inroads of disease. Little by little, however, even the least observant became painfully aware of the ravages wrought in her by suffering. Still, as she seemed hopeful, they had no immediate uneasiness; the menacing truth broke upon them only by degrees. They dared not give way to grief, or show their dread of a future whence would be missing the mainspring of their united action. Under stress of anxiety, they besieged the Almighty with petitions for the restoration to health of the Mother, whose place among them none other could supply. How consent to the decree which was destined to cut her off from them forever! While they hoped against hope, unable, as yet, to accept the chalice held to their lips, the malady progressed by leaps and bounds. On the eve of the feast of St. Rose,

they gathered to offer name-day greetings. With kindly word and smile she listened to their congratulations, their hope for her betterment ; but soon afterwards, turning to Sister Veronica, she whispered : « Sister, will you let me die without Extreme Unction ? » — « To-morrow, Mother, to-morrow ! » Even then, there lingered a hope that craved for a further delay. But next day, Mother Mary Rose was anointed in presence of the Community, obliged, at last, to relinquish hope and to face the afflicting reality of a bereavement only too close at hand.

After receiving the last sacraments, as it frequently happens with invalids, the dying Mother rallied a little, just long enough to be subjected to another call for self-surrender. The Sisters, reluctant to see her depart without leaving to those who should hereafter join the Congregation, some mute presentment of the Mother Foundress and first Superior General as she appeared in life, begged that she would sit for a portrait. This proposition, alarming her humility, she refused without hesitation. Sister Veronica referred the matter to the Bishop, who sent to the unwilling

Mother an express injunction to accede to a desire so entirely just and reasonable. Obedience then triumphed where solicitation had not been able to prevail. Mr. Hamel, a portrait painter, summoned from Montreal, took an ambrotype likeness as a preliminary study, and afterwards produced the half-length, life-sized portrait in oils, that now hangs on the north wall of the Chapter room at Longueuil, just above the spot where Mother Mary Rose breathed her last.

Bishop Bourget, ill during this time, could not grant to the dying Foundress the consolation of a last interview; instead, he despatched his coadjutor, Bishop Prince, to bear a special benediction and a message of encouragement. By this unforeseen absence of the Bishop, her chief counsellor, Mother Mary Rose acquired another trait of resemblance with the saints. Before the close of her life every prop on which she leaned had fallen away. Frail in body, sensitive in soul, she was left to face the hour of sore distress without human comfort, so that, bereft at the last of every support, she might cling to God alone.

The Sisters were summoned from Belœil to

receive her dying recommendations. On October fifth, in the evening, the suffering Mother weakened perceptibly, though her wasted features still retained something of their accustomed radiance. At last, with a patient smile, she turned towards Sister Veronica : « Sister, by your prayers you still hinder my departure. Consent to let me go ! » Soon afterwards she fell into a peaceful, childlike slumber from which she passed to the vision of her Lord.

It was 12.15 a. m., the sixth of October 1849, her thirty-eighth birthday.

Next morning at dawn, the tolling bell awoke the community to the realization of its irreparable loss. « Our Mother is gone ! » was the sorrowful cry of both pupils and Sisters ; — a cry that would reecho in their hearts until the summons came to join her where death is known no more.

The precious remains had been placed on a funeral couch in the Chapter room, where the departed Mother's countenance, bearing the impress of a peace « that passeth understanding », and still further ennobled in outline by the calm fixedness of death, drew the gaze of her stricken survivors.

Groups of religious, pupils, friends from outside, people of every station came to pray beside all that was left of one so deservedly esteemed and reverenced for her many virtues, and this unaffected, spontaneous tributes oftened, in some measure, the keen sense of this irreparable calamity.

On the morrow, Father Telmon, her director during the old years in Belœil, conducted the customary ceremonies, while the bier was transferred to the chapel. Here, close to the place where so often she had knelt in converse with Our Lord, began her last mute vigil before the Blessed Sacrament. A High Mass of Requiem, celebrated in the convent chapel early on the day of burial, by her brother the Rector of Belœil, was followed by a second, in the parish church, Longueuil. The removal of the body to the church became a triumphal progress, rather than a funeral procession. The parishioners turned out in numbers that were reinforced by a multitude of strangers from localities near-by. The remains of the venerable Superior, clad in her religious habit, were borne to an elevated catafalque which had been gracefully draped in white and strewn with

flowers. How vividly did the scene recall memories of a day, only five years gone, where, almost in the same spot, she had pronounced the vows that proclaimed the birth of a new Institute! At the altar stood the same pontiff; in the sanctuary, the same reverend brothers, the same Oblate witnesses; in the nave were grouped many of the same worshippers. They had heard her consecration, judged of her merit, had felt the influence of her spotless life, and had marked her rising undaunted, after a trial blamelessly undergone. The greater number had observed at close range, her initiative, her struggle to accomplish much with meagre resources; they had scrutinized her dealings with an often unsympathetic public. Every one present knew that the bright festival of five years past had formed but a prelude to the modest splendor of the day, that now was reverently recording the conclusion of her mortal career. Deep and general was the conviction that already she had deserved to hear the Master's word: « Well done. »

After the liturgical services had come to a close, the procession formed once again. The Board of church wardens claimed, as an honor, the task of

bearing the coffin back to the convent chapel. Here, after a brief interval that allowed the Bishop and the assistant clergy to chant *Libera me Domine*, amid the wordless lamentations of everyone present, all that was mortal of Mother Mary Rose was lowered to a grave made ready for her, in a vault beneath the chapel.

Meanwhile, a touching transformation had been effected. Delicate, sympathetic hands had removed from the Chapel all tokens of mourning, and installed before the Blessed Virgin's altar the newly-finished portrait of the regretted Mother. « For a moment », says one of her spiritual daughters, « we believed it to be a vision from on High. It gave inexpressible consolation ; it seemed an assurance that though irrevocably absent, our Mother would never cease to dwell among us in the spirit she had sought to impart. But her memory, far from descending with Mother Mary Rose to the tomb, continued to evoke the testimony of voice and pen. From unnumbered hearts arose a concert of praise for the worth of her beautiful life cut off in its prime, yet rich in noble achievement. To her intercession were attributed then, as

now, a number of blessings truly providential.

The words of Bishop Bourget will best sum up these testimonials of respect and confidence. After the interment, he said to the Community : « I declare to you, in all the sincerity of my heart, that I have often been seized with emotion on seeing so many virtues flourish in one soul. In presence of such a soul, I could not refrain from reminding myself that, as yet, I had done nothing for God, nothing for the flock entrusted to my care. I have prayed to your dear departed Mother for light in the guidance of my diocese, light such as she poured out upon her Institute when conducting its movements. I advise you to address her often, with filial confidence, and to say : ' O tender Mother, obtain that I may observe to the letter everything you have taught me to do '. »

Thirty years later, when reflection and experience might be thought to have dimmed this early impression, the Prelate wrote to the Community : « In my private devotions, I constantly invoke Mother Mary Rose as a saint ; I trust the Lord will one day glorify her before men by bestowing on her, through the voice of the Church, the

honors of the altar. »

When the Foundress was taken away, the Congregation possessed four houses ; it counted thirty professed religious members, seven novices and as many postulants. To-day, after the lapse of sixty years, it directs one hundred and twenty-four establishments, all teaching centers ; has a professed membership of nearly sixteen hundred, and imparts education to almost, if not quite thirty thousand pupils.

Four years after the Mother's lamented decease, it was decided to cut off from the Convent grounds a portion that would serve as a cemetery. Bishop Bourget blessed this « God's acre, » even at that early date so shaded with trees as to be quite hidden from the casual eye, and authorized the Sisters to transfer hither the bodies until now interred beneath the chapel. Mother Mary Rose found place at the foot of the great central cross, so that, in the field of rest after labor, she might still be, as it were, in the midst of her children. Filial piety has made of this sequestered spot a place of pilgrimage. Upon the low mound draped with ever green and fragrant

thyme, the Sisters have planted white roses. Each recurring spring in waking anew to life and freshness, they adorn the venerated resting-place with their spotless beauty. Their exquisite odor seems like the perfume that, according to the scriptural promise, draws youthful souls to run in the path marked out by the Spouse. Meanwhile, the tender shoot which the Mother Foundress planted with her own hand in the soil of Holy Church, which she nurtured with care, and for which she sought, by prayer, the dew from Heaven, is becoming a great tree, each year adding to its vigor and beauty. Beneath its branches that extend their shade from ocean to ocean, multitudes of Christ's little ones hásten to find a congenial shelter, and to praise with loving gladness the glory of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary.

MOTHER Mary Rose.

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